

# COLUMBIA JOURNALISM REVIEW

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SPRING 1970

## **Where TV News Fails**

SIR WILLIAM HALEY

## **Herbert Klein's Two Hats**

JULES WITCOVER

## **The "New Journalism" We Need**

GERALD GRANT

## **The Black Press in Transition**

L. F. PALMER, JR.

**Agnewism Revisited • Media Myths and Violence • Travel Reporting  
The Cyclamate Story • Newsmen and PR Prizes**

... to assess the performance of journalism in all its forms, to call attention to its shortcomings and strengths, and to help define—or redefine—standards of honest, responsible service . . .

... to help stimulate continuing improvement in the profession and to speak out for what is right, fair, and decent.

# COLUMBIA JOURNALISM REVIEW

Spring, 1970

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## Articles

- 7 Where TV news fails.  
Sir William Haley
- 12 The "new journalism" we need.  
Gerald Grant
- 17 Media myths on violence.  
Terry Ann Knopf
- 26 The two hats of Herbert Klein.  
Jules Witcover
- 31 The black press in transition.  
L. F. Palmer, Jr.
- 37 Should newsmen accept PR prizes?  
David Zinman
- 44 The fantasy world of travel sections.  
Stanford N. Sesser

## Departments

- 2 Passing comment: views of the editors
- 48 Notes on the art: Roger Wilkins; Aaron R. Einfrank; Howard G. Paster
- 55 Books
- 59 Unfinished business
- 64 Report on reports  
the lower case (inside back cover)

## Passing comment

### The subpoena dilemma

It has not been an auspicious season for governmental relations with the press and broadcasting. The President, to insulate himself from regular direct questioning, has taken to holding only infrequent press conferences. "If I consider that the press and the public need more information than *I'm giving* through press conferences, *I'll* have more [emphasis added]," he said in December. The Vice President, after suggesting that his November assaults on the news media were his last, has resumed the attacks and appears committed to continuing them. And, with at least tacit approval if not active cooperation from the Attorney General, newspaper, magazine, and TV journalists have been subjected to an unprecedented barrage of generalized "fishing-expedition" subpoenas of notes, still pictures, TV film "outtakes"—even travel vouchers and expense accounts.

It would strain credulity to suggest that all these occurrences were dictated from a single office in Washington. The conspiracy theory of human events is no more attractive or logical when used by the media than when employed against them or in connection with distasteful trends or unpleasant events they must report. But all these occurrences have political overtones, and all appear to reflect an attitude prevalent in the upper echelons of the Administration. That is, that there should be a new order of relationships between government and the news media; the media should be less critical of leaders of the party now in power; indeed, the media should mirror the leaders' philosophy more than they now do, and should even accede to becoming a de facto arm of the Attorney General's office.

Nowhere is this governmental attitude more apparent than in the subpoena epidemic. Newsmen,

like other citizens, for years have been called as witnesses in trials, but normally only to attest to the authenticity of published or broadcast material (unless, of course, the journalists were party to a lawsuit). Crime reporters, at their discretion, have informally exchanged selected information with police or the FBI in order to cultivate news sources. And newsmen covering civil rights activities in the South on occasion have provided evidence to authorities to prevent gross miscarriages of justice—some of them against journalists. But in these instances reporters' cooperation has been discretionary; involuntary release of notes, film, off-the-record confidences, or the identity of confidential sources has rarely been sought. Instead there has been informal bargaining and, usually, a compromise in which a subpoena, if employed at all, is narrowly drawn and merely ratifies the terms of the agreement. Even in the most critical national-security situations—wars, Presidential assassinations—or in riots in Watts or Detroit or Newark, blanket compromising of journalistic privilege never has been attempted.

With the disorders accompanying the 1968 Democratic convention in Chicago the situation began to change. Vast quantities of photos, film, and videotape were subpoenaed from the networks, newsmagazines, and Chicago media—by prosecutors, defendants, grand juries, and a Presidential commission. Because physical and not merely "verbal" violence had occurred, because police were instrumental in escalating it, because newsmen were among the victims of police brutality, and because confidentiality of news sources was not threatened, the media tended to cooperate. NBC alone reportedly spent \$150,000 to reproduce film and videotape to comply with subpoenas. The Chicago *Sun-Times* and *Daily News* photo libraries and darkrooms were immobilized for weeks to reproduce thousands of photos. No media organization was paid for the time and materials involved in complying with the subpoenas.

Then subpoenas were served on *Time*, *Life*, *Newsweek*, NBC, and four Chicago dailies for notes, files, unpublished photos, or untelevised film dealing with the SDS Weathermen; on CBS-TV and on San Francisco-based New York *Times* re-



porter Earl Caldwell for untelevised film and personal notes on dealings with the Black Panthers; and on *Fortune* for notes, tape recordings, and other "raw" files in connection with an antitrust action involving industrialist James J. Ling. Attorney General John Mitchell, after several subordinates had consulted with media organizations, in February issued what columnist Jack Gould called a "mini-apology" and promised "steps to insure that, in the future, no subpoenas will be issued to the press without a good-faith attempt by the Department of Justice to reach a compromise acceptable to both parties prior to the issuance of a subpoena." Then a subpoena was served on CBS-TV newsmen Mike Wallace and producer Paul Loewenwater for "outtakes" of an interview with Black Panther leader Eldridge Cleaver in Algiers, plus notes, correspondence, and expense accounts. A second subpoena also was served on Earl Caldwell. The Attorney General's "assurance" obviously was no insurance at all.

The question is not whether journalists should resist all subpoenas. Obviously they cannot, nor do they seek to. The question is whether government can and should enlist independent American newsgathering organizations as investigative collaborators in action against dissident political organizations (in this case, primarily the SDS and Black Panthers)—no matter how abhorrent to most Americans the doctrines and tactics of such organizations may be; whether American journalism can hope to fulfill its First Amendment mission if newsmen are suspected of being akin to the Soviet journalists-spies-informers described by former Moscow correspondent Aaron Einfrank in *NOTES ON THE ART*; indeed, whether American law enforcement agencies, which are the appropriate employers of undercover men, have reached such a low state of efficiency that they cannot maintain their own surveillance of potentially dangerous organizations.

To be free, the press and broadcasting must be able to gather as well as disseminate information. Privilege in editorial relationships and confidentiality of sources are crucial to that function. As Max Frankel explained in the February 6 *New York Times*:

In private dealings with persons who figure in the news, reporters obtain not only on-the-record comments but also confidential judgments and facts that they then use to appraise the accuracy and meaning of other men's words and deeds. Without that access and without such confidential relationships, much important information would have to be gathered by remote means and much could never be subjected to cross-examination. Politicians who weigh their words, officials who fear their superiors, citizens who fear persecution or prosecution would refuse to talk with reporters or admit them to their circles if they felt that confidences would be betrayed at the behest of the Government.

Sweden, recognizing this, long has had a national law that not only guarantees journalistic confidentiality but requires it—any newsman who reveals a confidential source can be prosecuted. More than a dozen states in our country also guarantee journalistic confidentiality. If bills recently introduced are passed, the federal government and several other states will provide similar guarantees. For now, however, the news media face a dilemma: if they comply with blanket, "fishing-expedition" subpoenas, they break faith with confidential sources and undermine credibility among already hostile segments of the community, groups who must have access to the media and about whom the public must have information. If they refuse to comply, in the absence of any clear statutory protection they hand the Administration another weapon that can be used to pummel at least some media organizations into docility.

In this situation the proper strategy seems to be the one the media appear to have adopted: to foster maximum publicity about government tactics, giving ground only grudgingly while trying to muster the understanding and support of the bar, civil liberties groups, and Congressmen.

## Agnewism revisited

*CJR*, in its Winter Issue, presented a brief analysis of Spiro Agnew's November assaults on the media ["The Agnew Analysis: False Premises, Wrong Conclusions"]. Since then, as noted above, the Vice President has spoken further on the subject. For

the record we offer this excerpt from a February 21 Vice Presidential speech in Atlanta:

To penetrate the cacophony of seditious drivel emanating from the best publicized clowns in our society and their fans in the Fourth Estate, yes my friends, to penetrate that drivel, we need a cry of alarm, not a whisper.

And this Vice Presidential pronouncement at a GOP dinner in the Virgin Islands:

I'll admit that Pulitzers are not won as quickly exposing the evils of Communism as they are by discrediting an American public official.

And this Vice Presidential comment on the aggressive reporting that helped move the President to acknowledge American military involvement in Laos [New York Times, March 10]:

Nowhere have I seen published criticism among the free media of the United States of the North Vietnamese aggression in Laos. They have 67,000 troops . . . there. It would seem to me to trigger some measure of criticism. I haven't seen it.

Also for the record, we note the revelation by the Columbus, O., *Dispatch* that the Administration, in an August-December, 1969, survey compiled a "fairness index" of TV network news and commentary. "Three of us," according to Presidential aide Patrick Buchanan, "monitor each of the evening network news shows and then we bring that report together and make it a single report on the evening television news." The results of the surveillance—stated in terms of approval or disapproval of the Administration—according to the *Dispatch*:

ABC—favorable, 29%; unfavorable, 29%; fair, 41%  
CBS—favorable, 24%; unfavorable, 25%; fair, 51%  
NBC—favorable, 15%; unfavorable, 44%; fair, 40%

The result of these and related activities such as calls to media executives last fall by FCC Chairman Dean Burch and Director of Communications Herbert Klein? According to CBS-TV newsman Walter Cronkite: "I feel the business has been intimidated, yes; is being intimidated." NBC News President Reuven Frank: "There has been a sensitization." Is this the intent of the Agnew speeches, the extracurricular activities of Messrs. Klein and Burch, the subpoenas, the Administration's over-

all "communications program" discussed by Jules Witcover on page 26? All indications are that it is. Indeed, President Nixon's daughter Tricia perhaps best summed up the effect—if not the intent—of "Agnewism." In a widely quoted UPI interview, she said:

He Agnew is amazing, what he has done to the media—helping reform itself. I'm a close watcher of newspapers and TV. I think they've taken a second look. You can't underestimate the power of fear. They're afraid if they don't shape up. . . .

Afraid? Of what? In the case of broadcasters, the federal licensing power? The print media, of subpoena problems? More verbal assaults? Despite these very real threats, are the nation's news media so powerless—so vulnerable—that some must even give the impression they have been intimidated? We think not. It is at such moments in history that American society—and opinion-leading institutions such as the news media—would do well to recall Franklin D. Roosevelt's admonition that "we have nothing to fear but fear itself." Contrary to periodic apocalyptic protestations regardless of which party is in power, this nation does not have one-party government, nor is the party in power, at any time, a monolith. Difficult, unnerving, and cacophonous as these times are, American institutions have not reached the stage at which the news media need fear for their freedom to act or their political independence—if editors, broadcasters, and others will only exercise it.

## More journalism reviews

At the close of the 1968 Democratic convention, Chicago *Sun-Times* newsman Ron Dorfman and *Newsweek* reporter Ken Pierce sat commiserating with a friend over local press coverage. After downing several drinks, one suggested calling other newsmen together for a "gripe" session. They posted newsroom notices of an open meeting at Riccardo's restaurant, and thirty-five reporters showed up. Out of that came contributions of \$900 for the first issue of *Chicago Journalism Review*, edited mainly by Dorfman, Pierce, *Sun-Times* reporter Christopher Chandler, and *Daily News*

reporter Henry De Zutter. Today the *Review*, though afflicted with a substantial deficit, is a monthly with 8,000 circulation, a weekly cash flow of \$1,000, a paid editor-reporter and a secretary, and an office at 11 East Hubbard Street, Chicago 60611. Subscriptions are \$5 a year.

Similarly, in New York City a group called Media Mobilization, formed out of mutual interest in the Vietnam Moratorium demonstrations of last fall, began meeting regularly to bemoan news media handling of various stories, and out of that came the first issue, in March, of *Inside Media*, a meaty newsletter also available for \$5 annually. (Address: Box 655, Radio City Station, New York City 10019.) Also in New York, the New York City Media Project offers *Pac-O-Lies*, a less ambitious but nonetheless useful sheet. (Address: 318 West 101st Street, Apt. 4, New York City 10025.)

In Berkeley, Calif., the New People Media Project has launched *Overload*, a "radical critique." (Address: Box 4356, Sather Gate Station, Berkeley 94704.) And black journalists publish an underground-type sheet, *Ball and Chain Review*. (Address: Box 9001, Berkeley 94701.)

Several other journalism reviews are being planned, and media criticism also is becoming an important part of local or regional underground newspapers such as the *Great Speckled Bird* in Atlanta and *Point of View* in Cleveland. *CJR*, which consistently has encouraged such efforts, welcomes these various new reviews—uneven in quality as they are—and hereby offers to act as an information clearing house for other groups seriously interested in launching responsible local reviews.

## Death of a story

For ten weeks this winter Baltimore was without newspapers due to a strike of web pressmen, and though radio-TV made efforts to compensate—especially educational station WMPB-TV, with a nightly news show featuring ten reporters—there were inevitable dislocations. But this has not been Baltimore's only press problem. Early in December, for instance, *Sun* labor reporter John M. McClintock wrote a timely story for the Sun-

day "Perspective" section on the spectacular success of Local 1199, Hospital and Nursing Home Employees (AFL-CIO), in organizing in New York, Charleston, S. C., and Baltimore. The typical Baltimore hospital worker's starting wage, the story pointed out, is barely above the federal poverty line; the union had been recognized by five local hospitals and fourteen nursing homes; and negotiations just begun at Johns Hopkins Hospital could increase wages—and raise hospital bills—enormously. The story ran in the first edition of *Perspective* for December 7, headlined FOR SAM SMITH, HOSPITAL ORDERLY: A BATTLE WHOSE TIME HAS COME. Then—though *Perspective* is normally an early-closing, all-editions "standing" section like the New York *Times* Week in Review—the story was replaced with an AP feature, QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON HOW THE NEW DRAFT LOTTERY WORKS. Why?

Local 1199, scenting typical symptoms of publisher interference, began checking into the *Sun*'s ownership structure. It found that the *Sun* and station WMAR-TV are owned by A. S. Abell Company, a holding company affiliated with the Mercantile-Safe Deposit & Trust Company. Three Mercantile board members also are A. S. Abell board members, and a member of Mercantile's board, J. Crossan Cooper, Jr., is chairman of the Johns Hopkins Hospital board. Local 1199 looked no further for an explanation of the demise of McClintock's story, for it seemed evident that if Cooper or an associate in the ownership echelon had not ordered the story killed, a top editor, afraid that it might displease the owners, had done so. Either way, journalistic morality suffered an unhappy blow in Baltimore. And one reason for growing concern over conglomerate ownership of news media was underlined in hues as bold as the ink in the two differing editions of *Perspective*.

## Public TV on trial

Noncommercial TV in this country long has had critical financing problems, and Congressional inaction on even the present penurious appropriation for public TV offers scant hope of change. But

as two recent incidents illustrate, financing is only one problem. Vulnerability to political pressure is another.

In one incident, National Educational Television scheduled a documentary produced by Alan M. Levin, *Who Invited US?*, for transmission to some 180 affiliates on February 13. The program, an outspoken, subjective personal statement about a half-century of U.S. military intervention abroad, was declined by some half-dozen major NET stations, including those in Washington, D. C., Norfolk and Richmond, Va., Austin, Tex., and Redding, Calif.

In another case, University of Wisconsin station WHA-TV, on the February 9 debut of *SIX30*—a Madison, Wis., version of KQED San Francisco's *Newsroom*—interviewed a young liberal alderman who chose the occasion to announce an intended recall campaign against Madison Mayor William Dyke. The Mayor, invited to respond next day, declined and instead enlisted political allies in state government to defer and possibly later disapprove a \$648,000 appropriation for a new transmitter needed to keep WHA-TV on the air. At this writing the outcome was in doubt.

The lessons of both cases are clear: if public TV is to be more than electronic pabulum, NET and local affiliates' officials must have the courage to present potentially controversial programs and the enterprise to seek community backing for this policy—backing which must include the press. Controversial as *Who Invited US?* or *SIX30* may be, they are not incapable of presentation balanced by opposing views. The First Amendment must be applied to TV—commercial and noncommercial—as well as to the press.

### Darts and laurels:

*Laurel:* To the Federal Communications Commission, for its historic proposal of a new rule that, if approved after hearings, would prevent new multimedia ownerships in any city and, by steps, break up existing ones. It also would require network "return" of more prime time to local stations.

*Dart:* To Chief Justice Warren Burger, for his poor example of First Amendmentmanship in arbitrarily excluding a CBS-TV newsmen from covering a February 21 banquet speech after coverage had been invited and advance texts distributed, and a host had affirmed that the dinner, for 200-plus, was "public." [See page 54.]

*Laurel:* To the American Society of Newspaper Editors' board, for its plan for a national ethics/grievance committee to investigate complaints lodged against newspapers.

*Dart:* To Wisconsin industrialist Benjamin Grob, for an anti-democratic campaign that has forced publisher William Schanen to close one weekly and sell another in a one-time three-paper group—all because Schanen printed an underground newspaper with which he disagreed but which he believed had a right to exist.

*Laurel:* To the Philadelphia *Bulletin*, for its continuing staff seminars with representatives of neighborhoods and community groups, to help sensitize editors and reporters to problems of the inner city.

*Dart:* To the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, for bringing about a staff upheaval on its *Atlanta*—a pioneering city magazine—for the apparent purpose of making the contents bland, conventional, and out of keeping with the progressive spirit of the city that the magazine represents.

*Laurel:* To the Bend, Ore., *Bulletin*, for three successive special tabloid sections—on poverty, migratory workers, and Indians in its region—that demonstrate that a small paper can examine social problems despite limited funds. (Per-section budget: newsprint \$60; composing room \$80; press time, labor, cuts \$100; extra editorial costs 0—others filled in for the managing editor, who wrote the sections.)



SIR WILLIAM HALEY

## Where TV news fails

Television newsmen have become technology's captives. To escape they must go beyond showing "happenings" and reintroduce "sifting, reporting, and evaluating."

■ In 1944, when victory in World War II was clearly in sight, the British Broadcasting Corporation arranged a Commonwealth Broadcasting Conference in London to discuss postwar service. When the war had begun in 1939 the BBC, which had started the first television service in the world, had had to shut the service down. As most of those at the conference had never seen TV, we opened the transmitter for one afternoon and showed them transmissions on closed circuit. A discussion followed about how TV was likely to develop. I said that I thought its main long-term service would be in news. As communications developed—we could not foresee satellites but we were sure that some sort of relays would eventually span the globe—every country would have visual access to every other country's happenings. The TV screen, wherever it might be, would be a window on the world. (It was, I think, the first time that metaphor was used for the TV screen.) And I forecast that for the completely natural use of this service flat TV receivers would have to be designed so that, like windows, they could be fitted flush into the

walls of every home (and, while this is not yet a practical possibility, it will come).

There are three points to this story. The first is the youth—one might say infancy—of TV even in 1970; less than twenty-six years ago well over 99.99 per cent of all those now viewing throughout the world had never seen TV. The second point is the incredible scientific and technical strides the new invention has made in that short time; as I write this the BBC is on the eve of receiving in England its first color program direct from Australia. The third—and by far the most important—point is that although the closed circuit showing resulted in some discussion of this conception of international news by television, there was none at all of the problems it would create. The point can be made even stronger. Although many of those present at the conference had been responsible for handling radio news for up to twenty years, no one foresaw that the televising of news would bring problems exclusively its own.

One can make excuses. We were still at war. The 1936-39 TV programs were a novelty and not an integrated service. Before the war the BBC's news had not acquired the importance, authority, philosophy, and stature that came during it. In 1944 we had neither the time nor the men to engage in deep thinking about the principles of tele-

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Sir William Haley formerly was editor of the *Times* of London, director general of the BBC, and editor in chief of *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. He studied U.S. television during a recent sixteen-month residence in this country.



vising news. Even if we had thought about them the problems could not have been foreseen. They could emerge only in practice. And what emerged in the early days was not final. Not only did the resources of TV change and evolve; the news itself changed and evolved. Neither the BBC nor the American networks nor other countries' television organizations faced as recently as 1960 the deep and confusing issues that they are having to wrestle with in 1970.

One of the problems my immediate colleagues and I did recognize as soon as we restarted TV in 1946 was that it was not possible to put the BBC's famous *Nine O'clock News* before the cameras and just leave it at that. It is perhaps necessary to explain that the 9 p.m. news, the BBC's main news program throughout the war, became a national and, to some extent, an international institution. Inside the United Kingdom it achieved such authority that, no matter what the British newspapers might report, people did not accept it until they had heard it on the 9 o'clock news. The BBC's news bulletins were also the main lifeline to occupied Europe and a major factor in the Resistance.

This authority of the BBC's news did not depend solely on its accuracy. Just as important to the millions who listened was its sense of news values. The length and placing of each item were objectively and professionally considered. Even the serious British newspapers would compare their main news page stories with the selection in the 9 o'clock news. They would go their own way, but they wished to study their judgment alongside that of the BBC's.

It was quickly found that preserving this judgment in TV news was a seemingly impossible task. Visual news values are in almost inverse ratio to real news values. What is most exciting to see is generally the least important to know about. To start a TV news program with an item of the seriousness and length it would be given in radio news would in all likelihood result in losing the viewer's attention. He would do something else until the news was over.

The BBC was not prepared to have two standards of news values for its programs—one for radio and the other for TV. So in the first years after the war the BBC had no televised news. It merely read

the 9 o'clock radio news in the TV program without any attempt to add visual material. Later, TV news programs were started. Much professional skill has been brought to bear on the problem of visual values and real news values, and some progress has been made, but the problem is still far from solved.

I think it has been solved even less in the United States. Sixteen months of American viewing left me with the conviction that the truth has not yet been realized that even supposedly exciting events by their recurring similarity lose all interest. By and large, fires, floods, sinking ships, railway and car smashups, even earthquakes have little originality. They all look the same on the TV screen. The same is now true of demonstrations. There is little significant visual difference between them, whether they be in the United States, in Britain, in France, Italy, Germany, or Japan. Yet they go on being shown because they represent action. They assume a bogus interest. In fact they bore the viewer. Worst of all, they waste scarce and valuable time that could have been given to items that really matter.

It is sometimes argued that this time-wasting is not serious because American TV stations give so much more time to news than the British and stations of other nations do. This is a fallacy. Once stories are not tautly edited and lose proportion and significance, the whole idea of news loses significance for the viewer. And the loss of significance is not made up by deep treatment of important and serious news items in documentaries. What documentaries I saw during my stay in the United States convinced me that the BBC is far ahead of the networks in this field. American TV documentaries have not the skill at getting at essentials, and the deep probing into them, that British documentaries have. All too often the longer they go on the more superficial they become. This is possibly one reason for the present reluctance of American TV stations and sponsors to sink money and time into news documentaries. Whatever the reason, the lack of enthusiasm for news documentaries struck me as one of the most serious developments in the tidal wave of TV that has swamped the American public's time and attention. It can have grave consequences for Ameri-

can democracy—unless the news stories are restructured or a corrective is provided in some other way.

These are elementary facts. It has been necessary to start with them because they are fundamental. They are as much at issue today as they were when TV was restarted twenty-four years ago. In some ways they are more so. The journalist has not been able to withstand the engineer. More and more technical resources and devices have been offered him. They have mastered him, and not he them. The outcome is even more crucial now that satellite communication is becoming common. Because

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*"Exciting events  
by recurring similarity  
lose all interest..."*

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the satellite relay does stand to open up the whole of the free world, because its cost is high, and because no conceivable distance—not even that from the moon to the earth—is any longer a bar to immediacy, both significance and journalistic judgment are in danger of suffering greater blows than ever before.

For some time now the immense engineering resources available to TV reporters and correspondents have highlighted the ordinarieness and inanity of much of what those resources are employed to transmit. The old metaphor of using a sledgehammer to crack a nut can all too often be modernized into "using a satellite to relay a television correspondent." It is not the correspondent's fault. He is as much a victim as the viewer. The urge to show things as they have happened or, better still, while they are happening leaves no time for the old journalistic skills. Air travel and the international telephone similarly in some way hamper the newspaper correspondent. Men are flown half across the world to a trouble spot they have never seen before and are expected to send back measured dispatches within twenty-four hours of their arrival. Even then the newspaperman has some little time to think and write. The TV camera

team must move in at once. It gets wherever it can as quickly as it can, the correspondent being left with the job of conveying the idea that what the viewer is seeing is the whole—or at least representative of the whole—of whatever is being covered. It can be neither.

The occasional roundups are even worse. They purport to be a summing-up, a considered general judgment. Hardly a situation in the world today can be thus treated properly with the resources and the time the TV correspondent has at his disposal. The camera is always pressing upon him. So is the editor at home, anxious to use the satellite—not only to televise him but other correspondents as well. The more commonplace the use of the satellite becomes, the more will station prestige (and eventually correspondent prestige) demand that everyone shall use it. The cost being so high, each use will be only a fraction of what it ought to be—if it is to be used at all. Thus there will flash on the home screens of Britons, Americans, Frenchmen, Italians, Germans, and others a succession of *obiter dicta* from men who are forced to do an inadequate job and who look as if they knew they were doing it.

For in yet another way the pressures on the TV journalist are greater than those on his newspaper brother. Not only is he expected to do twice as much twice as fast in a tenth of the space; he has the added load of having to be seen for much of the time he is doing it. This personalizes the news, making it more difficult than ever to form a true opinion of its objective value. It also debases the role of the journalist by making him, consciously or unconsciously, and at the very best to some infinitesimal degree, an actor.

That being so, it seems to me TV reporting from one country to another should not be left solely in the hands of the regular correspondent. The more important the events being covered, the more vital it is that journalists of the country where the news is originating should be used to complement the TV network's or station's own man. *And both men should be given time to do a thorough, responsible job.*

The existence of the TV international relay and of the satellite ought to make TV news editors and managers reconsider the whole scope and role of

television journalism. (One of the major weaknesses of TV journalism in some countries is that both editors and managers have a say in the matter.) The old patterns were never very good; these new inventions make them completely outworn. Instead of using the new aids for yet more variegated and more heterogeneous news stories, the journalists of this new television age should scrap present methods and use the new devices to increase the depth of treatment of the news that has significance and really matters. The faster communications become, and the more widely their net is thrown, the greater is the need to eschew any immediacy that has to be paid for by perfunctoriness. TV news should be more than a peep show. People may be titillated by the latest incident, whether it matters or not, being flashed to them in a split-second across thousands of miles. That is not journalism. It often is not news.

What is news? Some of us discussed this at one of the Columbia-duPont Broadcast Survey luncheons last year. Someone asked what had been the greatest TV newscast of the year. The Apollo's pictures of the first man landing on the moon were suggested. Stress was laid on the many hours the program had lasted and the world excitement at the event. I objected that it had not been news. It was a show—admittedly a most historic and spectacular show—but a show nonetheless. News is not

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### *"Documentaries lack the skill of getting at essentials..."*

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a happening. It is what journalists make of it. It is the sifting, reporting, and evaluating of what has happened. In the case of the moon landings this was done subsequently. It was not done by the Apollo camera automatically sending to earth the pictures of the first men treading the lunar surface. This may seem to be a fine distinction. I believe it to be a fundamental one. And it is precisely because I do not believe that TV newsmen are mak-

ing this distinction that I think TV news has so far missed its purpose.

This would not matter so much if newspaper readership in the United States and Britain was still on the increase. When TV started I forecast that its inability to deal with news adequately would give newspapers a second chance—in Britain at any rate. To some extent it has done so. But the opening of the whole world to news, the speed with which it is now communicated to newspapers, radio, and TV, the multiplicity of seemingly insoluble national and international dilemmas, have led to a flight from the news by those who, if a nation is to be healthy, should most be following it. Added to this is the increasing specialization in all kinds of activity. Here, too, results which used to take months, if not years, to circulate internationally now do so in days. It has all become too much of a load for many of those who have the world's work to do. A growing number of business and professional men and women now need only the publication that gives them the specialized information they need; for the news as a whole they depend on the nightly TV news broadcast.

This habit is, I think, more common in the United States than in Britain. In both countries the economic forces attacking newspapers are the same. Geography makes the consequences different. In the United Kingdom 54 million people live in an area slightly smaller than that of Wyoming. In spite of casualties it is therefore still possible to have eight national newspapers, with varying coverage of national and international news, able to get onto any British breakfast table. The vast continent that is the United States makes national newspapers well nigh impractical. Casualties among American newspapers have left the overwhelming majority of cities with only one newspaper. Often its coverage of national and international news is not such as to make it obligatory reading. In addition, the vastness of the United States precludes there being many single focal points of news interest.

Americans have nowhere near the same interest in the proceedings of Congress as the British have in daily reports of the meetings of the House of Commons. The uncertainty of the General Election date keeps British politics continuously alive

to some degree. The various sections of the nation are conscious of their abiding or changing political loyalties, and have papers to cater to them. Among the serious newspapers there is the *Daily Telegraph* to meet the needs of the Right, the *Guardian* those of the Left, and the *Times* those of the center. The popular newspapers also have identifiable stances. And the fact that all these papers circulate through the whole of the kingdom

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*"Television news  
should be more than  
a peep show..."*

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gives the British press a place and a voice that has not yet suffered much from TV.

British newspapers also do a better job than TV in reporting on the arts, law, science, local government, and the whole range of subjects which traditionally make the best complete newspapers. On neither side of the Atlantic so far has TV news sought to give a regular service in these news areas. Here, too, geography may make it more difficult for American TV to deal adequately with this responsibility. But the need is there; it must be met.

While geography can modify the consequences of scientific, economic, industrial, and social prog-

ress, it cannot quarantine them absolutely. Their effect on different countries is mainly a matter of time and degree. The most widespread problem of journalism today—of TV journalism more than of newspaper journalism—is the problem of every avocation. It is the problem of men and women everywhere. Mankind is failing to cope with the vastly increased speed of its communications. Jet travel—soon it will be supersonic—leads statesmen in time of crisis to fly to see each other before they have had time to consider what they are going to say when they get there. The greater the emergency, the less time they take to assess it. Businessmen start negotiations at the end of long flights when they are in no condition to do so. (Some large business organizations now recognize this and impose a forty-eight-hour assimilating period on their executives.)

News arrives in such proliferation and at such a rate that before it can be digested and judged it is overtaken by the next day's flood. Correspondents and reporters are mentally breathless. Refuge is sought in generalization. Speculation takes the place of judgment. Today's big news may prove to be tomorrow's trivia.

It is perhaps too much to ask television journalists to be the pioneers in reversing a trend that is bedeviling all mankind. But as their influence grows so does their responsibility. And that responsibility is to make the gadgets—even the satellites—their servants and not their masters, and to remember what is the true function of a journalist.



Edward Kratzke, jury foreman, shields himself from photographer as he arrives home.



Happy to get home again. Edward F. Kratzke, jury foreman in the Conspiracy 7 trial, carrying baggage, arrives home in Forest Park, after 4½ months' absence.

**Which Newspaper Do You Read?** Was the Chicago Seven jury foreman shielding himself from the photographer—*Chicago Tribune*, left—or the wind—*Chicago Daily News*, right?



"We don't need a whole new breed of novelists in action; we need more cogent journalism that tells us about problems rather than sketching conflict."

## The "new journalism" we need

GERALD GRANT

■ Several months after Benjamin Bradlee left *Newsweek* to become managing editor of the *Washington Post*, a series of staff shakeups began. After the first wave one of the editors invited a dozen young city staff reporters to lunch. As he sipped his Dubonnet on the rocks we nervously wondered about our fate. Most of what he said now escapes me. But I have a vivid recollection of his curiosity about the social circles we traveled in. Whom did we see? What parties did we go to? Whom did we know? His point was that a good deal of what went on in Washington could be learned at dinner parties—or at least that those who were able to establish a social relationship with sources after working hours were most likely to be privileged to the inside story on the job. Some of the best journalists in Washington had grown in reputation as their sources had grown in responsibility; in some cases they had been lucky enough to be classmates.

At the time his message struck me as mildly offensive. Not that it was pointless; his own prominent social connections had not hurt his career. As I look back, however, his inquiry no longer

strikes me as saying so much about upward mobility of journalists as about patterns of thought in journalism. His comments underscored the idea that talent in journalism is often a skill for finding out what somebody *else* thinks or knows about something. It may be an oversimplification, yet it is true that lively concern for whom a journalist knows reflects weak appreciation for how he thinks.

What separates most journalists from the few great ones is that the latter are not content with knowing what their sources think. They exhibit an independent intelligence that seeks to wrest meaning from the torrent of events rather than acting as mere transmission belts. They ask better questions because they have a better concept of what the "story" is.

There are some journalists who think, as Richard Hofstadter has said, in terms of configuration and style, thus delineating patterns as well as describing events. One recalls the work of Philip Meyer of the *Knight Newspapers*, who has effectively used social science skills to analyze current issues; of the perceptive reporting of Joseph Lelyveld and Anthony Lukas of the *New York Times*; of the probing exemplified by the work of Laurence Stern's and Richard Harwood's Insight Teams on the *Washington Post*. There has been a gratifying tendency on a number of papers such as *Newsday* and the *Los Angeles Times* to give reporters the

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time and freedom to do serious, thoughtful journalism. But as Daniel P. Moynihan said in his brilliant eulogy for Paul Niven, "[Journalism is] that most underdeveloped, least realized of professions. Not a profession at all, really. Rather a craft seeking to become such out of the need to impose form on an activity so vastly expanded in volume and significance as desperately to need the stabilizing influence of procedure and precedent and regularity."

Max Ways, in a *Fortune* article last October entitled "What's Wrong with News: It Isn't New Enough," attributes journalism's shortcomings to its failure to adopt new forms and new definitions of "the story." As a result of applying old yardsticks to events, he says, journalism continues to focus on what can be easily measured and told, to the neglect of more complex and important events unfolding in the society. But were the yardsticks ever any good? My guess is that journalism in 1870 failed in much the same ways it does today. The underlying explanation, then as now, is the kind of mental habits and attitudes most journalists bring to bear on events.

Journalists work by a code that makes many of them moral eunuchs. The professional, in print at least, generally pretends to be without opinions or convictions. His objectivity differs from that of the scientist who demands freedom to develop a fresh hypothesis but then remains objective in the sense that he will look in an unprejudiced way at the results of his experimentation.

Reportorial objectivity has been under vigorous attack by the "New Journalists." Citing Norman Mailer and others, they rightly sense that newsroom objectivity may result in untruth. It masks feelings and stifles imagination. More importantly, it can produce a trained incapacity for thought in the young journalist. Unconsciously he comes to believe that what he thinks doesn't matter. He regards himself as a conduit. The reporter calls an expert for a quote as an unfortunate shortcut to thinking the problem through himself. He asks not what do I think, but what do they think? That can be a habit difficult to break. He seldom has a sense of personal responsibility for what he writes.

This is why Michael Arlen, writing in *Living Room War*, is right when he characterizes much

current journalism as propaganda. Not that experts shouldn't be interviewed, or that reporters must be philosopher-kings; but they should be something more than tape recorders. Most journalists are caught in a nether world. They are neither men of action, forced to confront a problem by struggling with it in an operational sense, nor men of true imagination or contemplation.

Yet uncritical enthusiasm for the New Journalism of passion and advocacy may cost more in the loss of the valuable skepticism of the traditional newspaperman than can be gained through the new involvement. The trouble with advocacy may be that it leads writers who haven't thought or felt much to portray cardboard emotions. Most readers would rather hear the experts. The challenge is to make sense out of the experts and of events. We don't need a whole new breed of novelists in action; we need more cogent journalism that tells us about problems rather than sketching conflict, that gives us the arguments rather than two sets of opposing conclusions. We do not need more passion but more intellect, more understanding.

While there are heartening signs of change, it remains depressingly true that the rewards in journalism think a problem through and expresses the subtleties, but to the author of jazzy personality journalism tend not to go to the writer who painstakingly pieces, scoops, and exposés. Exposés are nominated for prizes (often rightly so, of course) while a complicated piece of analysis wins the epithet "thumbsucker." These attitudes are related to the city-room environment where keen—often counterproductive—competition encourages reporters to jealously guard their scoops and current projects even from their co-workers. There is no incentive for the kind of intellectual sharing and discussion of first drafts that is common in an academic community or in any profession where the contributions and criticisms of one's colleagues are considered essential.

Work tends to be defined as scurrying about and asking questions. It is the rare reporter who has the fortitude to sit at his desk and read a book on a subject he intends to write about. Not infrequently one reads a long newspaper series—in which hundreds of man hours of reporting and travel time have been invested—and it is glaringly

obvious that some of the most basic books written in that field have not been glanced at by the writers. I once asked Nicholas von Hoffman of the *Washington Post* how he avoided the usual pitfalls of newspaper writing. His exaggerated reply: "I never read newspapers."

Interestingly, von Hoffman was in his thirties when he turned to journalism, having been a community-action organizer with Saul Alinsky. Perhaps that thought-provoking apprenticeship also protected him from learning the bad intellectual habits that are bred into many young reporters. There may be something of a pattern in his experience, although it could just as well be explained by genetic endowment. The careers of a number of exceptional journalists reveal some catalytic intellectual experience outside the newsroom: Walter Lippmann's association with Santayana and his diplomatic experience; David Broder's opportunity to break out of the usual journalistic formulas on the *Congressional Quarterly*; Nick Kotz's background of Phi Beta Kappa and study at the London School of Economics before his present assignment with the *Des Moines Register* and *Tribune*; Willie Morris' residence at Oxford before tackling the *Texas Observer*, and now the editorship of *Harper's*; Anthony Lewis' immersing himself in the Harvard Law School as a Nieman Fellow before doing his exceptional reporting on the U.S. Supreme Court; Alan Barth's sojourn with the Schlesingers while he was a Nieman; Joseph Lelyveld's Fulbright year in Southeast Asia before joining the *Times*.

Journalists pride themselves on being generalist-specialists. Ridicule of academic specialties ranks high as newsroom sport. Yet the methods by which journalists are trained tend to be extremely narrow, even though most are probably college graduates. On most large papers today reporters specialize early in fields in which few have any general background: transportation, politics, education, or perhaps even elementary education. But the academic, whose specialty or current research may be narrowly focused, usually has had a broad intellectual base that emphasizes the interrelationships of knowledge and common methods of inquiry. The journalist learns his lore on the job. He is steeped in the concrete and specific phe-

nomena pertaining to his beat, learning in the syncretic, associative way. Thus, he often lacks a broad conceptual framework of his subject, or a method of analysis. Hence he is usually very good in predicting what will happen tomorrow, but seldom about the shape of things five years from now. Similarly, he often remains unaware of historical parallels of current events, or of cross-cultural comparisons.

The aims of journalism differ crucially from those of scholarship. The academic investigating police behavior, for instance, wants to tell it all once, thoroughly, exhaustively. His intellectual aim is to formulate a theory or model that will explain the seemingly variable surface events, and perhaps predict the shape of things to come. The

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### "Journalism continues to focus on what can be easily measured..."

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newspaper has a vested interest in the concrete and specific, in telling the same story again and again in a way that makes it sound new and different. Thirteen petty robberies must be written in a way to make them sound as different and interesting as possible.

Both approaches have their strength, however. If the journalist often obscures the general truth in mountains of fact, the scholar frequently remains blinded to the specific truth of a particular situation because of his faith in his abstractions, and occasionally, his ideology. Noam Chomsky has shown in *American Power and the New Mandarins* how frequently the latter is true. He convincingly pairs Neil Sheehan's description in the *New York Times* of fetid slums in Saigon with some scholarly accounts of the supposed benefits of American-sponsored "urbanization" in Vietnam. He writes:

Many have remarked on the striking difference between the way the press and the visiting scholar describe what they see in Vietnam. It should occasion no surprise. Each is pursuing his own craft.

The reporter's job is to describe what he sees before his eyes; many have done so with courage and even brilliance. The scholarly adviser and colonial administrator, on the other hand, is concerned to justify what he has done and what he hopes to do, and—if an expert as well—to construct an appropriate ideological cover, to show that we are just and righteous in what we do, and to put nagging doubts to rest.

Paradoxically, the limited generalization characteristic of most journalism is often a great strength. It doesn't care what the general theory is, but what is true in this particular instance. Ignorance of what is supposed to be true may have the productive result of puncturing myth or forcing scholars to re-evaluate old evidence.

Much more could be said of the sins of academe—of its petty jealousies, blindnesses, and irrelevancies. My aim, however, has been to probe the roots of what Norman Isaacs of the Louisville *Courier-Journal* once called the "mental prearrangement" that passes for thought among many journalists. More weight could be given to exceptions to some of the norms cited. But the point is precisely that there are such norms, though they are increasingly being violated.

The more general question that obtrudes is how can the norms be changed? To begin with, journalism schools could profitably follow the developments of law, education, and business schools whose faculties are no longer top-heavy with former practitioners, although they have an important place. Faculty are needed from the academic disciplines who are interested in applying their knowledge to the problems of mass media and who will teach students more thoughtful modes of analysis in a realistic setting. Such new faculty could also play a vital role in strengthening journalism schools' much-neglected role of critically assessing the performance of the press.

Newspapers should also recruit from law schools and graduate schools of sociology and political science. A great many more skilled young academics in the social sciences could be attracted to new careers in the mass media if given responsibility to tackle significant issues. Newspapers need not become miniature graduate schools, but neither should they produce the kind of shabby analysis that they do of city budgets and school reading

scores. Personnel practices must change. Salaries must rise. Sabbaticals should become standard. Research assistants will be needed. Change might be so drastic as to free the average reporter from drudgery and scut work in the way that the average elementary school teacher has been liberated in New York City. The costs of carrying out these suggestions might prove a considerable financial drain on many smaller papers—at least until their benefits could be established. For that reason, such programs ought to be worthy of foundation support.

But these are long-term changes. What about now? Newspapers have only begun to take advantage of outside expertise. Academic skepticism of "newspaper writing" can be overcome with the right kind of assurances from sensitive editors that copy will be responsibly handled (not to mention massage of professorial egos with promises of the right kind of display). This puts a premium on editors who are aware of the outside expert's area of competence and interest and who can frame issues in an intellectually stimulating way. Outsiders should also be involved in seminar-like lunches

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### *"Enthusiasm for advocacy may cost in loss of valuable skepticism..."*

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planning sessions and critiques of coverage. This use of experts as "consultants" has become fairly common among magazines but is employed less frequently by newspapers.

A bolder necessary step is to go beyond hiring the free-lance talents of academics to hiring the academics themselves. But the twist here is to employ them for their skill as teachers, as catalysts who would develop new concepts and methods of reporting. Distinguished teachers and thinkers could be brought to newspapers for short periods to head special projects and reporting teams. Some might come on sabbatical; others for only a semester or a few months or weeks. They might come

from think tanks, foundations, publishing houses, and universities as well as from the ranks of freelancers and other diverse social critics. Why not ask Ralph Nader, Saul Alinsky, or James Baldwin as well as sociologist Nathan Glazer, psychologist Robert Coles, economist Robert Lekachman? There are scores of candidates, though perhaps not all as well known, in every large city.

Under such a system, a small team of reporters might be assigned to work for a month preparing a series on the police, or an assessment of educational programs in the slums, or a survey of changing racial attitudes. They might work with a political scientist, a sociologist, a social psychologist. They would read and jointly discuss several books and perhaps a half-dozen relevant articles, attempting to define issues, identify historical trends, decide where reportorial energies should be directed.

Instead of rushing out to interview sources, reporters might spend time digging into census documents, examining attitudinal research, and drawing some conclusions of their own. There would be some debate about what the story is—with one result that the series would not be, like so many others, merely an elaboration of the obvious. Interviews would not be sought until there was some evaluation of what had been written, what the questions were, and the kinds of sources that could best answer them. In the case of the racial attitude series, reporters would have a chance to learn about constructing a survey, how data is fed into a computer, and some elementary notions about principles of statistical inference.

David Riesman, commenting on a draft of this article, noted that more reflective social scientists are under attack today by some of their radical activist colleagues. Although generally enthusiastic about the suggestions here, he added, "I could imagine the ironies of academicians in the newsroom being more journalistic than the journalists."

One should not overlook the benefits that would accrue to academics as a result of immersion in the newsroom. They would come away with a more realistic sense of the possible, of how complicated things really are in the concrete. It might broaden the outlook of many scholars about what their

fields of inquiry ought to include. It could prove an interesting testing ground for many kinds of hypotheses and have benefits in research terms, including research about the mass media. New and better academic publications might be another by-product. The hostility of many journalists toward academics—perhaps a result of their unconscious resentment at their dependence on the experts—might be reduced. There might be a similar gain

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*"Possibilities for  
cross-fertilization  
within a newsroom  
are limitless..."*

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in understanding on the part of the academics, who are frequently jealous of the journalists' power (and angry at what they regard as its misuse), and who sometimes resent journalists who "cream off" the fruits of their research.

The whole notion of a newspaper as an educational institution—internally as well as externally—is central to this concept. The possibilities of encouraging greater cross-fertilization within the newsroom are limitless. Outsiders would be astonished at how little information or expertise is exchanged or developed among newspaper staffs, which have an exceptional range of talent and great opportunities for such development. A consulting firm like Arthur D. Little would close tomorrow if internal staff growth processes were as moribund as those on even our largest newspapers. Newspapermen, though they would vigorously deny it, jealously guard their imagined status and small prerogatives within the newsroom, and nothing in the way the place operates is likely to encourage them to do otherwise. One way is to bring in a catalyst from whom all learn as they teach each other. The multiplier effects of such a process could be surprising. Journalism could expand your mind.



## Media myths on violence

TERRY ANN KNOPF

A study of media performance reveals improvements and a healthy willingness to experiment with new procedures. But certain shortcomings persist.

■ Several years ago a resident of a small Northern town kept insisting to a local newspaper reporter that a policeman had been shot and killed during a racial disturbance there. The reporter checked and rechecked but was unable to substantiate the story. In fact a policeman had been killed, but in another city. The man simply had heard a garbled version of the story—not an unusual occurrence in the confusion that prevails during crises.

Crisis situations increase the need for news. During most serious disturbances, news media are bombarded with calls from anxious citizens wanting information, clarification, verification of what they have heard. So important is the flow of news through established channels that its continued absence can help precipitate a crisis. In 1968 in Detroit the absence of newspapers during a protracted strike helped create a panic: there were rumors in the white community that blacks were planning to blow up freeways, kill suburban white children, and destroy public buildings; in the black community, that white vigilantes were coming into the area to attack the residents. Gun clubs sprang up in the suburbs; black leaders urged

preparation of survival kits. On March 7—nearly four months after the strike began—Mayor Cavanagh had to go on TV to plead for calm.

As racial disorders have become a familiar part of the national scene the media have demonstrated a growing awareness of their responsibilities and a healthy willingness to experiment with new policies and procedures. Technical improvements also have been made. The City of Detroit, for example, has built a press room large enough for 150 people, with independent telephone lines. Operational techniques have been modernized—the Pittsburgh police, among others, have on occasion provided a helicopter for the press. And central headquarters or “press centrals” have been established to help eliminate conflicting reports. Moreover, a number of cities have adopted or revised guidelines for reporting. These guidelines—sometimes formal, sometimes informal—urge that unnecessary interpretation be minimized, rumors be eliminated, unverified statements be avoided, and superlatives and adjectives in “scare” headlines be excluded. One set of guidelines put the matter simply: “Honest and dispassionate reporting is the best reporting.”

In accordance with these guidelines, newspapers have tended to move away from the “shotgun” approach—the front-page buildup, complete with splashy pictures and boxscores of the latest “riot”

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news. Dramatic but meaningless predictions have also largely disappeared. In May, 1967, *U.S. News & World Report* declared that Newark was "not expecting trouble," while Cleveland was voted the city "most likely to explode—again." Cleveland failed to erupt in 1967, but Newark experienced one of the most massive outbursts in our country's history. This kind of journalism is much less common today.

There is also evidence of greater sympathy and sensitivity toward blacks. How far have we come? Consider the following comment from the *New York Times* on July 23, 1919, concerning the violent disorder in Washington, D. C.:

The majority of the negroes (sic) in Washington before the great war were well behaved. . . . More of them admitted the superiority of the white race, and troubles between the two races were undreamed of. Now and then a negro intent on enforcing a civil rights law would force his way into a saloon or a theatre and demand to be treated the same as whites were, but if the manager objected he usually gave in without more than a protest.

These changes represent considerable improvement. But serious problems remain. Glaring instances of inaccuracy, exaggeration, distortion, misinterpretation, and bias have continued at

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## *"Media not only frighten the public but confuse it..."*

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every level—in newspapers and newsmagazines large and small, Northern and Southern, liberal and conservative.

The wire services are probably the most under-examined segment of the media, although as much as 90 per cent of the news in some newspapers on a given day may come from the wires. One error in a wire service report from one city may be repeated in hundreds of newspapers and newscasts. In York, Pa., in mid-July, 1968, for instance, incidents of rock- and bottle-throwing were re-

ported. Toward the end of the disturbance UPI in Harrisburg asked a stringer to get something on the situation. A photographer took a picture of a motorcyclist with an ammunition belt around his waist and a rifle strapped across his back. A small object dangled from the rifle. On July 18, the picture reached the nation's press. The *Washington Post* said:

**ARMED RIDER**—Unidentified motorcyclist drives through heart of York, Pa., Negro district, which was quiet for the first time in six days of sporadic disorders.

The *Baltimore Sun* used the same picture and a similar caption:

**QUIET, BUT . . .** An unidentified motorcycle rider, armed with a rifle and carrying a belt of ammunition, was among those in the heart of York, Pa., Negro district last night. The area was quiet for the first time in six days.

The implication of this photograph was clear: The "armed rider" was a sniper. But since when do snipers travel openly in daylight completely armed? Also, isn't there something incongruous about photographing a sniper, presumably "on his way to work," when according to the caption the city "was quiet"? Actually the "armed rider" was a sixteen-year-old boy who happened to be fond of hunting groundhogs—a skill he had learned as a small boy from his father. On July 16, as was his custom, the young man had put on his ammo belt and strapped a rifle across his back, letting a hunting license dangle so that all would know he was hunting animals, not people. Off he went on his motorcycle headed for the woods, the fields, the groundhogs—and the place reserved for him in the nation's press.

More recently, an AP man in Dallas filed a story on a student takeover at Southern Methodist University. The Fort Worth *Star-Telegram* in its evening edition last May 2 put the story on the front page and gave it a banner headline:

### **BLACKS SEIZE OFFICE OF S.M.U.'S PRESIDENT**

**Police Are Called to Stand By**

**DALLAS (AP)**—Black students with some support from whites took over the office of the president of

Southern Methodist University today and swore to remain until their demands are met. . . .

Reports from the scene said from thirty to thirty-five students were in control of [President] Tate's office.

The takeover occurred during a meeting of Tate and a campus organization, the Black League of Afro-American and African College Students.

The story had one major flaw—it wasn't true. While about thirty-five students had met with the university president, they were not "in control" of his office; nor had they "swore to remain" until their demands were met. No such "takeover" had occurred. Glen Dromgoole, a staff writer for the *Star-Telegram*, later reported what really happened. The black students had met with the president for more than five hours discussing recent demands. The talks were more friendly than hostile. (At one point hamburgers were brought in.) By the end of the meeting, agreement had been reached on most of the issues. Apparently the wire service reporter had accepted the many rumors of a student takeover.

Martin Hayden of the *Detroit News* has suggested "an almost mathematical relationship between the level of exaggeration and the distance of news transmission." Edwin Guthman of the *Los Angeles Times* maintains that the early wire service report "is at the crux of the news media's problem." However, it is more likely that instances of misreporting remain a problem at every media level. The Lemberg Center for the Study of Violence, in investigating twenty-five incidents in which the news media had alleged sniping, found that, along with the wire services, local and nationally known newspapers bore a heavy responsibility for imprecise, distorted, and inaccurate reporting.

While treatment of racial disorders is generally more restrained today, the news media continue to overplay the more violent or sensational aspects of a story. The central media concern during the disorder at Cornell University last April, for example, was the emergence of the blacks from the student union. A picture of the students carrying rifles and shotguns, splashed across the nation, had a distorting effect on public opinion. The *New York Times* put the picture on page 1, and *Newsweek* used it on its cover the

following week. Certain facts were largely ignored: prior to the disorder a cross had been burned in front of a black women's dormitory; the students had heard radio reports that carloads of armed whites were moving toward the campus; when the students emerged from the building their guns weren't loaded. What was basically a defensive response by a group of frightened students came across in the media as a terrorist act by student guerrillas.

Aspects of the disorders are dramatic and do merit extensive coverage. But the media still tend to equate bad news with big news and to confuse the obvious with the relevant. Thus when sixty-five students at Brandeis University took over a building last year it rated a story on the front page of the *New York Times*—despite the fact that

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## "Disparities between headlines and stories are a problem..."

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there was no violence, that classes continued, and that the university suffered only minor inconvenience. I was on campus then. My only recollection of anything unusual was that on the first day or two an attendant asked to see my identification, and for the next week and a half I noticed large numbers of reporters, press cars, cameras, and other equipment. I sometimes wondered if there weren't more reporters outside than students inside the building.

The *Times*, along with most newspapers, missed the unusual climax at Brandeis. In a war of nerves with the students, President Morris Abram showed consummate skill in handling the situation, remaining flexible on the issues, mobilizing the support of the student body and faculty, and, above all, refusing to call in police. Eleven days after the crisis had begun the students quietly left the building—a dramatic victory for the Brandeis community, a dramatic example of how to handle a university crisis in contrast to fiascoes at Columbia and San Francisco State. Yet the students' depar-

ture merely merited a *Times* story about three inches long, well off the front page.

Disparities between the headlines and news stories are another problem. Often much less occurs in the story than the headline would indicate. Last year, for example, some concerned parents in Jacksonville, Fla., removed their children from Kirby Smith Junior High School after a local radio station had broadcast an exaggerated report of a fight between black and white students. The school principal later indicated that "classes continued and there was no panic." Nevertheless the *Miami Herald* headlined its story last April 25: MOMS MOB SCHOOL AFTER RIOT 'NEWS.' Sometimes no violence occurs in the story, dramatic headlines to the contrary. A story appearing in the *Boston Globe* last May 10 told of a peaceful rally by a small group of students at a local theological seminary. According to the *Globe*, the rally was "brief and orderly." But the headline above the story read NEWTON CAMPUS ERUPTS.

The use of the word "riot" presents another problem because it has no precise meaning in terms of current disorders. *Webster's* defines a "riot" as a "tumultuous disturbance of the public peace by three or more persons assembled together and acting with a common intent." The difficulty is that "riots" have become so frequent and come in so many sizes and shapes as to render the word meaningless. There is something ludicrous about lumping together as "riots" Detroit, with forty-three deaths, 7,000 arrests, and \$45 million in property damage, and an incident in which three people break a few store windows. Yet this is precisely what the news media still do. The continued media use of the term contributes to an emotionally charged climate in which the public tends to view every event as an "incident," every incident as a "disturbance," and every disturbance as a "riot." Journalists would do well to drop the word from their vocabulary altogether.

No law says the media have to interpret and not simply report the news, but having assumed this responsibility they have an obligation to make reasonable judgments based on careful analysis. Unfortunately, journalistic attempts in the direction of social science research have been rather amateurish, particularly where new trends and

patterns are concerned. The case of the Cleveland "shoot-out" is a good example. On July 23, 1968, an intense gun battle broke out between the police and a group of black nationalists led by Ahmed Evans. Before the disorder was over 16,400 National Guardsmen had been mobilized, nine persons had been killed, and there was property damage estimated at \$2.6 million. The *Cleveland Press* on July 24, 1968, compared the violence to guerilla activity in Vietnam:

... it didn't seem to be a Watts, or a Detroit, or a Newark. Or even a Hough of two years ago. No, this tragic night seemed to be part of a plan.

A reporter writing in the *New York Times* of July 28, 1968, stated:

It marks perhaps the first documented case in recent history of black, armed, and organized violence against the police.

More recent reports have revealed that the "shoot-out" was something less than a planned uprising and that the situation was considerably more complicated than indicated initially. Unfortunately, following the events in Cleveland, disorders in which shots may have been fired were immediately suspected by the press of being part of a "wave." A series of errors involving a handful of cities became the basis of a myth—that the pattern of violence in 1968 had changed from spontaneous to premeditated outbreaks. Few of the nationally known newspapers and newsmagazines attempted to verify sniping reports coming out of the cities and over the wire services; few were willing to undertake independent investigations; and far too many were overly zealous in their assertions of a new "trend" based on limited and unconfirmed evidence. Unwittingly or not, the national media had constructed a scenario on armed uprisings.

Although having more time to check and verify reports than daily newspapers, the newsmagazines were even more vocal in their assertions of a "new pattern." On September 13, 1968, *Time* took note of an "ominous trend" and declared that the violence "appears to be changing from spontaneous combustion of a mob to the premeditated shoot-outs of a far-out few." The story went on to indi-

cate that "many battles" had begun with "well planned sniping at police." Nearly a year later, on June 27, 1969—long after investigation by a task force of the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence, by the Lemberg Center, and by the New York Times (which reversed itself on the Cleveland question) had cast serious doubt about premeditated outbreaks in Cleveland and elsewhere—*Time* still was talking about the possibilities of a "guerrilla summer" and reminding its readers of the time in Cleveland when "police were lured into an ambush." Once started, myths are difficult to extinguish.

The most recent myth created by the media involves an alleged "shift" in racial disturbances from large to small cities. Last July 25 a syndicated reporter for the News Enterprise Association (NEA) noted:

The socially sizzling summer has begun—but unlike recent history, it seems to be the minor, not the major, cities which are sweltering.

In an article entitled "Riots, 1969 Style," *Newsweek* declared on August 11:

... the traditional riot scenario is still being played out this summer—with one major difference. This season the stage has shifted from the major population centers to such small and disparate communities as Kokomo, Ind., Santa Ana, Calif., Cairo, Ill., Middletown, Conn., and Farrell, Pa.

Last September 9 the New York Times captioned a picture:

NEW RIOT PATTERN: Rioting in Hartford, Conn., last week . . . underscored the fact that smaller cities this summer have had more racial trouble than the big ones.

Similar stories appeared about the same time in scores of other newspapers, including the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Baltimore News American*, the *Woburn, Mass., Times*, and the *Pittsburgh Press*.

In fact, racial disorders occurring over the past few years—not just this past summer—have been concentrated in smaller cities. About 75 per cent of all outbreaks recorded in 1968 by the Lemberg Center's Civil Disorder Clearinghouse occurred

outside the 100 largest cities. For the first six months of 1969 and also for the summer no appreciable change in the percentage was noted. Furthermore, many of the cities cited as prototypes of this latest "new pattern"—Hartford and Middletown, Conn., Cairo, Ill.—have had disorders in previous years. The difference is that such outbreaks were completely overshadowed by a few enormous outbreaks in large cities such as Newark and Detroit.

Discovering the origin of these and other myths would be useful—a faulty wire service report, an inept reporter, an unreliable source. But aside from the fact that such a task would be almost impossible, it would miss a central point—that the system of reporting ensures that errors of fact and interpretation may be repeated, compounded, and reformulated as myths. In recent years the various components of the media have become extremely intertwined and dependent upon one another.

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*"The effect  
is to pander  
to the public's  
prejudice..."*

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The wire services, the nationally known newspapers, and the newsmagazines feed one another news and information. While the system undoubtedly speeds the flow of news to the public, it has encouraged a parrot-like character in which the various media segments tend to reproduce rather than examine one another's views.

In this respect the New York Times' caption proclaiming a NEW PATTERN assumes greater significance. Prior to its appearance in the *Times*, I talked with Jack Rosenthal, who had been working on a story on the relatively cool summer. When the subject of a new "shift" in violence came up I indicated that such allegations were false and misleading. Rosenthal wrote a thoughtful story, dwelling on police-community relations, civic programs, and the new community spirit among



blacks. His story made no mention of a "new riot pattern." Apparently the caption writer had paid more attention to what *Newsweek* and the *Wall Street Journal* were saying than to his colleague at the *Times*.

The failure of the media to tell the complete story in the case of Cornell or the right story in the case of Cleveland goes beyond a lack of initiative or an inclination to sensationalize. It also indicates a bias—one which, notwithstanding Vice President Agnew's declarations, cuts across political and geographical lines. The media are no more aware of this bias than is the general public aware of its own. In part, we could call it a class bias in that those who comprise media staffs—reporters, editors, headline writers, etc.—are part of the vast American middle class and, as such, express its views, values, and standards.

Both the general public and the media share the same dislike of protestors; both are unable to understand violence as an expression of protest against oppressive conditions; both prefer the myth of orderly, peaceful change, extolling the virtues of private property and public decorum. People are expected to behave in a certain way; they just don't go around yelling and cursing or throwing rocks. Both will grant that it took a revolution to secure our independence and a civil war to end slavery (at least officially), but that was all long ago and somehow different. The bias also has elements of racism in that color is never far from the surface. It is difficult to say where the class bias begins and racist bias ends. These elements are inseparable and reinforce each other, and both manifest themselves in the thinking of the public and media alike.

A growing body of research shows that racial disorders are a part of the social process. The process includes an accumulation of grievances, a series of tension-heightening incidents such as police harassment, and a precipitating event such as an arrest which crystallizes the tensions and grievances that have mounted—the "last straw" that triggers the violence. The "typical rioter" is young, better educated than the average inner-city black, and more dissatisfied. He wants a better job but feels that prospective employers will discriminate against him. He is likely to be a long-term resi-

dent of the city. (In a survey in Detroit, 90 per cent of those arrested were from Detroit, 78 per cent lived in the state, and only 1 per cent lived outside the state.) He is extremely proud of his race and is politically conscious. He is more interested in and informed about politics than blacks who are not involved in a disorder. He is also more inclined toward political activism. (In one survey, nearly 40 per cent of the participants in the disorder—as compared to only about 25 per cent of the nonparticipants—reported having been involved in civil rights activity.) Finally, he receives substantial support from the rest of his community, which does not participate but regards the violence as necessary and beneficial.

As important as the findings in these studies are, they have made virtually no impact on the vast majority of the public. Most Americans continue to believe that violence is caused by a tiny and insignificant minority, that "outside agitators" and "criminal elements" are mainly responsible for isolated outbursts that have little or no social significance. Intellectuals must share a portion of the blame for this situation. Having completed their studies, they have been notoriously reluctant to roll up their academic shirtsleeves and assume leadership in presenting their ideas to the public. There is a trace of condescension in their assumption that good ideas from above will somehow trickle down to the "masses of asses," as one academic I know calls them.

Greater responsibility for the failure to confront the public's resistance rests with the news media. They have failed to commit their power and prestige on behalf of such studies. They have failed to place the ideas before the public and push for reform in an aggressive, effective manner—settling for a splash of headlines and stories initially, and little followup. Instead the media have opted for the status quo, reflecting, sustaining, and perpetuating outworn beliefs of their predominantly white audience.

Historically the notion of plots and conspiracies has always had great currency in this country—and in other countries, too. Prior to the Civil War, Southerners frequently viewed abolitionists as "outside agitators" trying to stir up the happy slaves. Violent interracial clashes during World



War I were said to have been instigated by the Bolsheviks, and the outbreak in Detroit in 1913 was attributed to an "Axis plot." The current wave of disorders has been blamed on individuals such as Stokely Carmichael and H. Rap Brown or, for those who like a more international flavor, "Communist infiltrators." In a survey of six Northern cities by the Lemberg Center, 77 per cent of all whites interviewed believed that "outside agitators" were a major contributing cause of disorders. When Los Angeles Mayor Sam Yorty recently blamed a rash of school disorders on a conspiracy

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*"Research shows  
that racial disorders  
are a part of the  
social process..."*

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of the Black Student Union, the Students for a Democratic Society, Communist sympathizers, and the National Council of Churches, he was following a long—though not very honorable—tradition.

Such allegations are usually made without a shred of evidence, except for an occasional "someone told me so." Nevertheless the media have frequently taken their cues from the public in formulating and circulating such reports. Misinterpretations of the events in Cleveland, along with assertions of a "new pattern" of premeditated violence, are blatant examples of this form of bias. But more often the bias is expressed in more subtle ways. For example, when rumors circulated that "outside agitators" were involved in a disturbance in Omaha, Neb., a news story appearing in the *Arkansas Gazette* last June 27 made reference to the rumors but also mentioned that the mayor had no evidence to support such reports. Yet, the headline above the story read: 'OUTSIDERS' LINKED TO OMAHA RIOTING.

A look at the way in which the disorders are written up reveals, tragically, that the majority of the media and the public share essentially the

same view of the violence—as meaningless, purposeless, senseless, irrational. Media treatment of the disorders following the assassination of Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., illustrates the point. The sense of loss and injury among blacks at the time of the assassination was extremely great—far greater than among whites. The unprecedented wave of disorders—approximately 200—was expressive of the anger, bitterness, resentment, frustration that black people everywhere felt.

How did the media handle the disorders? Stories in just two newspapers analyzed—the *Buffalo News* of April 9, 1968 (the day of Dr. King's funeral), and the *Trenton Times-Advertiser* one day later—are fairly typical. No attempt is made to place the violence in a social context. The reference to the assassination of Dr. King is perfunctory, with only a passing mention of his funeral and a few shouts about his death. Value-laden words receive unusual emphasis. The participants are "marauders," not men; they "rove" instead of run; they move in "gangs," not groups; they engage in "vandalism," not simply violence.

We have all grown so used to viewing blacks as stereotyped criminals that it is difficult to picture them in any other role; hence such frequent press concoctions as "roving gangs," "roving vandals," "roving gangs of rampaging teenagers," or, for variety, "a window-smashing rampage of roving gangs of Negro youths." The *New York Times* assertion last July 1 that "roving bands of ruffians" were involved in a disturbance in Middletown, Conn., seems somewhat feeble by comparison. The effect of such treatment by the media is to pander to the public's prejudice, reinforcing stereotypes, myths, and other outmoded beliefs. The media not only frighten the public but confuse it as well.

And let us not forget the effects on the news media. The proliferation of underground newspapers, radical publications, black journals, as well as underground radio stations on FM bands held by churches and universities, indicates that the media are failing to reach certain groups, and that they still lack sensitivity, sophistication, and skepticism commensurate with their important and strategic position.

## Reporting conflict in an age of change . . .

□ Conflict is part of the crucible of change. It may yield progress or repression. But conflict is not a state of social equilibrium. Whether conflict is resolved by violence or cooperation will depend in part upon the actors' perceptions of the world about them. Providing an accurate perception of that world is the media's most important responsibility. . . .

Collectively, and within their own organizations, the news media can accomplish much before . . . disorder starts. Indeed, how much they do may determine whether it starts at all or how much it grows. . . .

The most controversial and difficult issue for radio and television centers on the delay of news. Where the news event is of a kind likely to symbolize past injustices to any significant group in the community, there is a danger that such an event may trigger a large-scale disorder. Moreover, once a crowd has begun to gather at the scene of such an event, immediate broadcast of the event and its precise location is likely to draw additional persons to the area and add to crowd-control problems of the police, thereby contributing to the likelihood of a violent outbreak and its severity if it does occur. . . .

Once it is decided that the incident is potentially inflammatory or may attract a crowd to the scene, most of the newsmen with whom we have discussed the problem suggest a delay of at least thirty minutes to confirm the story, make sure the facts are clear, and to avoid exaggeration. Under particular circumstances it may require a delay of an hour or longer. Media transmittal of unconfirmed reports, emotional or unbalanced accounts, and visual portrayals of violence without perspective can do at least as much damage as news delay.

Where communitywide guidelines are in effect, it is best to designate one journalist representative to determine the length of the embargo. Such centralization eliminates the competitive pressures that tend to undermine this policy. A complete embargo beyond one hour, and preferably beyond thirty minutes, probably cannot be justified. . . .

In reporting both incidents that may grow to disorders and the disorders themselves, the media can make additional preparations within their own organizations. Some TV stations, for example, have already made the decision not to cover riots with live mobile television units. Rather than send conspicuous shoulder-braced sound cameras to a riot, they can plan to send the much smaller, hand-held silent camera, plus a man with a tape recorder to pick up random sound. Similarly, they can use black and white instead of color film, which requires more light; in this way, they can reduce the need for crowd-attracting lights and apparatus. They should plan in advance the deployment of manpower within the news organization, what the process for assimilation shall be, and who shall exercise responsibility at each stage.

A neighborhood fight should not be called a riot. A disturbance should not be designated racial without confirmation. Accuracy should have priority over

speed. The story, particularly its violent aspects, should be kept in perspective. . . .

If, for example, the police radio carries a report of a National Guardsman being shot, it is tempting to put this on the air, because it has the surface authenticity of a police report. Many of these reports are based on rumors and are simply requests for confirmation by a police officer. The story is skimpy; no details substantiate it. During the tension of a riot, the police can act hastily and carelessly. Moreover, the day is past when everything the police say should be broadcast as "truth." The report must be confirmed. . . .

News is the unusual, the extraordinary; it is something that doesn't happen every day. The media have no need to report each airliner that arrives safely; it is not a matter of general public interest. The objection, however, is not that the media focus upon the unusual; rather it is that they focus on the unusual aspects of the unusual. Recall, for example, the coverage of the meeting at Watts, devoted to discussing grievances and what could be done to calm a tense racial situation. The media focused on the extremist statements of one sixteen-year-old-boy. This was not a representative portrayal of a legitimate news event. . . .

The media have properly rejected the suggestion that they report "good" news simply because it is good. It apparently has not occurred to very many newsmen, however, that events should not go unreported simply because they involve a nonviolent resolution of conflict. One function of the media is to aid in coordinating society's response to change. They can fulfill this function in part by telling the public how conflicts are resolved nonviolently and by giving such resolutions the same prominence they give the violent manifestations of conflict. . . .

The press does provide a marketplace for ideas, but it is not of the sort commonly supposed. The increased level of violence in this country today is partially owing to the sluggish response of our institutions to social change; but the press shares in this sluggishness, and an important part of its inadequacy is the inability of new and different voices to gain routine and peaceful access to the centralized news media. . . . It should become habitual editorial policy to display fairly and clearly the opinions, analyses, and solutions offered by a wide variety of people, expert and non-expert, covering the spectrum, regardless of the proprietor's personal position.

Too many news organizations fear social ideas and social action. As a result, they stimulate, dissatisfy, and arouse anxiety only to fall silent or limit themselves to irrelevant clichés when thoughtful solutions are required. Alternative solutions to our most urgent social problems, based on the work of our most imaginative social thinkers, and written with the clarity that only a good journalist can produce, ought to be standard. . . .

America can look forward to change—the only certainty. This will require not only information about events, violent and nonviolent, but ideas about what to do about these events. . . .

Specifically we recommend:

A. The Corporation for Public Broadcasting be provided with a budget for news and public affairs programming comparable to that of the television networks. . . .

B. The Justice Department and the Federal Communications Commission should scrutinize carefully all mergers, license applications, and license transfers which would result in greater concentration of media ownership. . . .

C. Perhaps most important is that the government must stay abreast of new technological developments in the communications industry and be prepared to assure that further concentration of control does not occur. This is particularly important with respect to CATV. . . .

D. There is a good deal of confusion, particularly among practicing broadcast journalists, about what the fairness doctrine requires. . . . We recommend that the FCC clarify this ambiguity and resolve it along the lines indicated.

E. Each year the Federal Communications Commission must pass on approximately 2,500 broadcast license renewal applications. . . . If the Commission is to effectively discharge its mandate, it must develop at least broad guidelines for such determinations in order that its staff can bring to the Commission's attention those cases that raise serious questions. . . .

F. Journalists should reexamine the degree to which existing news judgments incorporate obsolete standards, including a tendency to report violence because it is sensational, rather than because it is significant. Moreover, in reporting conflict, the press should develop a special sensitivity to the danger of overstating the degree of conflict.

G. Beyond reexamining existing standards for reporting violence, newsmen should reconsider the contemporary utility of well established news-gathering practices. Perhaps most important is the interpretive news stories—which can be written with time for calm reflection and balanced judgment—be allocated more resources and be given greater prominence. For newspapers, this means running such stories regularly on page 1. . . .

H. We strongly recommend: 1) that the media hire and train increased numbers of newsmen from minority groups; 2) that the media provide the kind of regular surveillance of minority group activities which it applies to other segments of the community; 3) that the media provide information to local groups about preparing press releases and, more generally securing access to the media through traditional channels short of demonstration, confrontation, and violence; 4) the use of ghetto "stringers"; 5) inclusion of members of minority groups in day-to-day news, such as births, deaths, weddings, business promotions, opening of new businesses, and social functions; 6) more background and in-depth stories on social issues and particularly those stories dealing with facets of the American scene with which the majority of the audience have little actual experience.

I. There is a need for greater interaction between the news media and the community and for responsible criticism of media performance. There are a number of ways in which this can be brought about:

1) News organizations should establish and publicize the existence of grievance machinery or internal appeal boards to hear the complaints of persons who feel that their viewpoint has been unfairly excluded from the press or that the press coverage of an event in which they were involved is inaccurate. Such a program has worked well at the *Louisville Courier-Journal*.

2) News organizations should encourage local press councils to provide a continuing exchange of views between the news media personnel and representative members of the community.

3) Journalism schools should ingrain in their students a tradition of continuous reexamination and self-criticism through, *inter alia*, the establishment of journalism reviews and programs designed to prepare the student to apply new findings in communications theory to the practical problems of communicating the news.

4) The establishment in other major metropolitan areas of publications like the *Chicago Journalism Review* which provide a forum for public debate on news media performance.

5) News organizations should freely criticize other news organizations and report on their performance the same as they would any other institution in our society. . . .

J. We endorse the mid-career training programs offered at some universities and urge that more media owners and operators, particularly television, make time and funds available to their newsmen to take advantage of these programs.

K. We recommend that every news medium establish a code or other form of guideline to be followed in the coverage of riots or other events involving group violence. . . .

L. We recommend that news organizations resist those critics who would have them deny coverage to protest. The news media can reduce substantially whatever incentive they provide for violence by providing balanced treatment of at least four aspects of demonstrations:

1) The purpose of the demonstration. What is the nature of the grievance? Why are the demonstrators there?

2) The events leading up to the demonstration. Have other remedies been sought; if so, what has been the response of those addressed?

3) The demonstration. How many people were present? How did they conduct themselves? Do not focus only on the most extreme conduct or dress.

4) The provocations, if any, and the official response. Why were the demonstrators trying to provoke the police? Did the police use more force than necessary to maintain order? Were there any extenuating circumstances, such as physical exhaustion or personal security of political candidates?

The standard for determining whether an event will be covered should place more emphasis on the nature of the grievance, the number of people affected, the severity of the grievance and less emphasis on the willingness of the aggrieved to engage in violence or the likelihood that they will. . . .

—*Mass Media and Violence*,  
Report to the National Commission  
on the Causes and Prevention of Violence.

Criticizing the Administration's Communications Director is unfashionable, but his dual role appears to involve inherently conflicting interests.

## The two hats of Herbert Klein

JULES WITCOVER

■ For the past four years the Ruder & Finn public relations firm, in conjunction with American University in Washington, has made an annual award to the government public information office judged to have been the most helpful to the Washington press corps. About five hundred newsmen are asked to "nominate" candidates. At first the award was based directly on the reporters' votes, but in 1966 the CIA, which has a standing policy of telling nothing to anybody, finished in a third-place tie with the White House and the State Department. Now representatives of Ruder & Finn, the University, the National Press Club, and the Women's National Press Club look at the poll results and pick the winner themselves. This year eighty-six reporters voted and the State Department was first, with the staggering total of thirteen votes. But State had won the award the previous year and so—apparently guided by the same logic that keeps repeating Big Ten champions out of the Rose Bowl—the committee gave the citation

to the runnerup, the White House, which got eight votes.

Actually there was some question whether those eight votes were intended for the office of the Presidential press secretary, Ronald L. Ziegler, or for the office of Herbert G. Klein, who bears the title of Director of Communications for the Executive Branch of the Federal Government. The committee resolved the matter by reviewing some favorable newspaper articles about Klein and giving the award to him and his associates.

As questionable as the whole selection procedure was, it was particularly appropriate that a PR organization applaud the Klein apparatus for helping the press. The nature of that operation, taken in all of its parts, is much more likely to look good to a PR firm than to a discerning press.

In today's Washington, criticizing Herb Klein is most unfashionable, and there is some validity to that attitude. Arriving at Lyndon Johnson's credibility chasm, Klein set out with energy and ingenuity to restore press and public confidence in what the national administration said. The fact that restoration of that confidence would redound to the political benefit of the new President did

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not make the objective any less worthy from the viewpoint of the national interest. So when President Nixon proclaimed that he would run an "open administration" and Herb Klein committed himself to see that the President's pledge was implemented in all the executive departments, one could only wish him well. And when Klein throughout 1969 did succeed in opening more doors to newsmen and making more Cabinet-level officials available to them, the praise he received was well deserved.

To properly assess Herb Klein's work, however, it is necessary to recognize that providing information and greater access to officials in the Nixon Administration is not his only—or necessarily most significant—function. His work has two distinct aspects, and only one of them—dealing with the traditional dispensing of government information—has come into clear focus. In that area Klein's performance has been both diligent and innovative. For the first time a superstructure has been built over the bureaucratic public information maze. From his office on the first floor of the Executive Office Building adjacent to the White House, Klein, with a staff of aides, has provided centralized oversight of basic Nixon Administration information policy without essentially disturbing decentralized implementation.

Klein's chief assistants divide liaison responsibilities, each taking responsibility for several Cabinet departments. Klein functions as a sort of big-brother PR consultant to the departments, available to give advice, sometimes offering it, occasionally reaching into the departments to untangle a problem. Department public information officials may speak directly with Klein on specific matters, but in most cases they deal with these liaison men. Each department and agency PIO submits two reports a week, notifying Klein of major activities scheduled—speeches and trips by the department secretary, press conferences, press releases, and so on. About once a month Klein calls the departmental PIOs to his office for a general discussion of information problems. Sometimes White House officials are brought in to explain developing programs; on one occasion, Klein invited Sam Archibald, head of the University of Missouri's Freedom of Information Cen-

ter in Washington, to discuss the Freedom of Information Act. In all this Klein is in a sense a "coordinator" of government public information policy. But he is hardly the "czar of information" that some members of the press feared he would be—reaching into every agency, shaping every policy, and determining the withholding or release of every scrap of paper or information.

A survey of a number of ranking departmental PIOs indicates that Klein has left them pretty much on their own and has permitted a variety of procedures. Joseph Loftus, who left the New York *Times* Washington bureau to become Special Assistant for Public Affairs to Secretary of Labor George Shultz, says: "Klein's attitude is, 'When in doubt, put it out,' and while he won't give you a blanket promise to back you up every time, he'll take a sympathetic view. . . ." Archibald, who has made a study of the Klein activity, says: "They've got an awful lot of information out that didn't used to get out. But everything I have to say about the operation has to be followed with 'yet.' So far it's been easy for him to be a good guy. There hasn't been a crunch yet." Some department information men agree with the latter comment, but all say that Klein has made no effort to tell them how to run their own offices.

Having created this rather loose superstructure, Klein has used it in direct ways to shake loose information denied at lower levels to the press corps. Legitimate complaints that come to him are passed on to the departments and agencies under White House imprimatur, and answers usually are forthcoming. "In the early stage we had to convince people we meant it for real," he says. "Now I have fewer phone calls because the press can say, 'If you can't do this, I'll go see Herb Klein about it.'"

Also, Klein has worked personally to convince Cabinet members that an open information policy is necessary and constructive. Because a number of the Nixon Cabinet appointees were new to Washington, Klein took on the job in late 1968 of finding public information chiefs for them. He sought experienced Washington newspapermen, but only one prominent one—Loftus—joined the new Administration, and he was recruited by Shultz, not Klein. Under Nixon, as under Johnson, most top

information jobs are held by professional PR men. Klein also functions as a sort of public-information chaplain for the Cabinet officers. When any have had a particularly newsworthy announcement, Klein has arranged a White House forum. Klein's office, in short, has been a place where both the high-level bureaucrat and the reporter can go for public-information help—and from both “clients” he has received generally high marks after his first year.

One door, however, has not been pushed open by Klein, and that is the most important one—the door to the office of the President. Although a few select columnists have seen Mr. Nixon, the general policy has been no individual interviews, and certainly not on the record. In the Administration's pecking order Klein clearly has much more impact than Ziegler, who is a processor and

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*“He is hardly a  
'czar of information'  
as some feared...”*

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a gatekeeper rather than a policy man; they complement rather than compete with each other, Ziegler parcelling out the daily nuggets and trivia on the President's activities, Klein coordinating information policy. However, almost certainly neither of them can unlock the President's door for the press. If that happens, it will be unlocked from the inside, by Mr. Nixon himself.

Klein's other function has been somewhat obscured if not camouflaged by the traditional information function. It is, by whatever hard or soft name one cares to give it, optimum dissemination of propaganda for the Nixon Administration, and it has been pursued with all the diligence and innovation that have marked his approach to a more open information policy. He has installed the most imaginative and effective system yet seen in Washington for putting an Administration's best foot forward on a continuing basis. The operation is much more astute than diabolical. It takes advantage of opportunities

that earlier government public relations chiefs have ignored, and it undoubtedly increases public knowledge of what the Administration is saying. But it is an exercise in propaganda, and the same hand that pushes open doors wraps Administration ideas and men in the most appealing packages.

The most graphic illustration of Klein's second function is his approach to the American press as a nationwide business. Until last year, news of a national Administration—its programs and its problems—was transmitted almost exclusively through the resident press corps in Washington. That group—exceeding 600 newsmen—has been called the fourth branch of government, and the title has not been much of an exaggeration. Press conferences, press releases, speeches, legislative proposals, background briefings—all have been fed through the Washington press corps as the prime pipeline to the country. Newspapers, news-magazines, and radio and television networks have sent some of their best men to Washington and trained them to be experts in governmental affairs so that they could report—and assess—what any Administration was doing. Editorial writers had to depend on what their Washington correspondents—or the wire services—wrote from Washington. What they got, under optimum circumstances, was a balanced account, with an Administration's contentions and promises measured against other facts available to the Washington reporter: the views of opposition party spokesmen and the results of independent interviewing and investigation. What they got, sometimes, was an unbalanced account; but seldom did they get an unvarnished transmission of what an Administration said, with exaggerated claims of success left completely unchallenged.

Early in Klein's tenure he moved to change the procedure, not by attempting to cut off the Washington press corps but by extending the Administration's message beyond it. There are some 1,700 daily newspapers and thousands of radio and TV outlets in the United States. Why shouldn't the Administration speak directly to them? The idea was so obvious and so sensible, Klein says, that he was astounded nobody ever had thought of it. “Too many people think that if you only talk in

Washington, you've covered the country," he says.

Klein began to distribute Presidential speeches and statements not simply to the Washington press corps but by mail to newspaper, radio, and TV news editors all over the country. Last spring, when the Administration unveiled an ambitious program for postal reform, the Washington press corps, as always, was briefed. Then, under Klein's guidance and coordination, a briefing team was put on the road to spread the Administration message unscreened by the Washington press corps. Post Office Department sub-Cabinet officials called on editorial boards in New York, Los Angeles, and other major cities to explain the plan—as the Administration wanted it explained, not as the Washington press chose to do the job. Shortly afterward, when the Administration unveiled its

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*"One door has not  
been pushed open—that  
of the President..."*

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welfare reform program, again the Washington press corps was briefed, and again the briefers took off to the hinterlands. This time the task force was split into two groups, each taking several cities and regrouping for major briefings in places like Chicago and Los Angeles.

Klein's office enlisted the help of private public relations offices in some cities; breakfast and lunch meetings with news executives in leading hotels were arranged, with the Republican National Committee picking up the tab. The briefers were explaining government policy. But the fact that the Party was paying these bills—including, according to Klein, the travel expenses of the briefers—amounted to an acknowledgment that these government employees were embarked on Party business. Last January, when President Nixon delivered his State of the Union Message to Congress, a copy of the speech went to editors across the country with a covering letter on official White House stationery, signed by Klein. But the mailing

was financed and processed by the Republican National Committee—again an acknowledgment of the partisan political nature of the activity.

By now the procedure of putting the Administration's show on the road is well established, and Klein defends the practice as no more than sensible information policy. "It's not whether the news is dictated in Washington," he says, "but that it's found in regional areas. In 1968, we had surrogate candidates for the Presidential candidate going into smaller places, and they had regional impact. If the same guy said the same thing in Washington, he'd get three inches in the local paper. . . . It isn't a feeling that the Washington press corps is not doing a good enough job. But look at how many editorials are written around the country on the basis of an eight-inch wire service story." Klein says the editors and TV executives to whom his briefers talk are not push-overs. "I don't think there's any lack of intelligence in those regions," he says. "We have to take a chance that when they see our programs they may disagree."

Last August Klein told a meeting of the North Texas Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America in Dallas that President Nixon was giving a "westward tilt" to his Administration, looking more and more to opinions and ideas beyond "the Washington-New York syndrome." This was the same basic theme struck by Vice President Spiro T. Agnew in his attacks on the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and the TV networks who "bask in their own provincialism, their own parochialism" and talk only to each other. It is a theme that also ran through the Nixon Presidential campaign of 1968; Klein says the attitude led to the establishment of the Western White House at San Clemente and has prompted the President to meet foreign visitors outside of Washington and to hold Cabinet meetings around the country. It is not quite the Barry Goldwater refrain of 1964 about sawing off the Eastern Seaboard and letting it float into the Atlantic, but the basic outlook is the same—the East does not reflect what America is and ought to be, and an Eastern press that thinks it speaks for the nation speaks only for itself and reflects an unrepresentative perspective.

Thus what the Herb Klein operation does—

better than any earlier government information organization, from all accounts—is to increase the flow of information with one hand and the range of self-serving publicity with the other. During World War I one man, George Creel, similarly tried to wear two hats—as the dispenser of government information and as the dispenser of propaganda. He would release facts on war casualties in one breath and spread self-serving stories in the next. The result was the destruction of the credibility of both; in World War II, the functions were separated.

Klein says that his position and the functions of his office are not comparable to those of Creel. "In war you're really putting out propaganda," he says. "I don't think things going out here are in that class." When allegations about a My Lai massacre broke last fall, Klein says, some persons in the Administration urged him to release stories of Vietcong atrocities as a counter. "I turned it down," he says. Klein acknowledges that exercises like the road-tour briefings on the welfare reform program benefit the Administration, but he insists they are part of "helping the press get their job done." What recipients of the briefings did with the material, he says, was their business.

All that is quite true. But it is true also that a veritable army of full-time public information specialists in Washington—5,200 in the Executive Branch alone in the last official count seven years ago, Archibald says—is being supported by the taxpayers to inform them of what their government is doing and saying. An Administration that simply informs has the wherewithal to do so without recourse to party funds; an Administration that publicizes and propagandizes for party advantage must ethically tap such outside resources. Signing the bill over to the Republican National Committee does not completely resolve the ethical question. The two hats of Herb Klein, one as explainer of programs and the other as their salesman, may be one more than a man in his sensitive position ought to wear.

There have been disturbing signs, in fact, that Klein on occasion may even have worn three hats. Calls by his chief assistants, with Klein's knowledge and concurrence, asking local broadcasters

around the country whether they intended to make editorial comment about the President's November 3 Vietnam speech, smacked of the intimidator. But Klein steadfastly insists that it was simply interest, not pressure. He points to his long service on freedom-of-information committees as editor of the *San Diego Union* as evidence of his awareness of the dangers of such excesses and the unlikelihood of Herb Klein's practicing them. Nor was there any intimidation intended in the Agnew speeches, he insists. Klein says he saw the text of the Des Moines speech criticizing the TV networks only hours before it was to be delivered, and his only action was to alert the networks and the press. His objective in so doing, he says, was simply to be sure that no impression was left that the Vice President had tried to "slip out of town" to deliver his attack.

But the fact remains that many in the Washington press corps took the phone calls and the speeches to constitute pressure to quit criticizing the President on Vietnam. In spite of Klein's assurances that Agnew's only intent was to stimulate self-analysis by the press and TV, and that his assault was over after a speech in Montgomery, the Vice President recently was at it again in Atlanta, assailing "a cacophony of seditious drivel from well organized clowns [anti-war demonstrators] and their friends in the Fourth Estate." Considering Klein's responsibility for orchestration of Administration promotion activity, and the pattern of press-watching and criticism that has marked President Nixon's first year, the press and TV would be less than prudent if they did not adopt a wary posture toward the man in charge of press policy. Sooner or later every President is bound to undergo "the crunch," and, as Sam Archibald says, the test of Klein's determination and ability to inform the public and simultaneously put the Administration's best foot forward will not really come until then. An attitude of "leaning" on the press—not necessarily by Klein but by others in the Nixon Administration—could break into the open in a crisis in which the press is riding herd on the government. At that time it might be much more difficult to leash that attitude, even if Klein were so inclined.



L. F. PALMER, JR.

## The black press in transition

The great commercial national newspapers have waned, and *Muhammad Speaks* and the *Black Panther* have become prominent. What does this portend?

■ In 1945, when Gunnar Myrdal's classic study *An American Dilemma* was published, this country had 150 Negro newspapers with a total circulation estimated at 1.6 million, and Myrdal could write: "The Negro press . . . is rightly characterized as the greatest single power in the Negro race." There were three circulation "giants" in the field: the Pittsburgh *Courier* (approximately 257,000); the Chicago *Defender* (202,000); and the Baltimore *Afro-American* (137,000). Twenty-five years later there are 250 to 300 Negro newspapers with a circulation of more than 2 million; they are referred to as the black press; and there is considerable question about the power they wield in black communities. The circulation "giants" are *Muhammed Speaks* (at least 400,000); *Afro-American* (119,000); and the *Black Panther* (110,000).

Like the readership it serves, the black press is in transition. Characteristically, the field is changing so fast that it virtually defies measurement. Some editions aren't sold, but are given away; large numbers of publications know only a miraculously marginal existence; and small publications come and go in erratic spurts. But it is apparent

that the press of, by, and for black people has entered a new evolutionary stage.

The changes in the "big three" of 1945 alone illustrate this. At the close of World War II, the *Courier*, *Defender*, and *Afro-American* all were national weeklies and could be purchased as easily in Biloxi, Montgomery, or Fort Lauderdale as in Pittsburgh, Chicago, and Baltimore. Today the *Defender* is one of two local black dailies in the country (the other is the Atlanta *Daily World*). The *Defender's* 1969 circulation was 33,320 Monday through Thursday, and 36,458 for its weekend edition. The Pittsburgh *Courier* has dropped to a national circulation of 48,798, plus 15,478 in Pittsburgh only. Of the old "big three," only the *Afro-American* has held its own, showing 1969 ABC figures of 119,902—a quarter-century drop of only 17,789.

Among other great names to have withdrawn from the national field is the Norfolk *Journal and Guide*, consistently credited with being the nation's best-edited and best-dressed black newspaper. Now more of a regional sheet, it has dipped from 64,368 in 1946 to 29,213. Meanwhile, both the Michigan *Chronicle* and Los Angeles *Sentinel* have made dramatic local gains—the *Chronicle* (published in Detroit) from 25,868 circulation in 1946 to 72,776; and the *Sentinel* from 15,892 in

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L. F. Palmer, Jr., a reporter-columnist for the Chicago *Daily News*, formerly worked on the Chicago *Defender* and Chicago *Courier*.

1946 to 41,482. The *Chronicle*, whose editor and general manager, Longworth Quinn, is considered to be one of the best administrators in the field, achieved sizeable increases by winning and holding many readers during Detroit's daily newspaper strikes of 1964 and 1967-68. In Los Angeles, the *Sentinel's* steady gains parallel the city's growth and the migration of blacks westward.

Though copies of the largest black papers can still be found outside their home territories, the end of the national black newspaper is clearly in sight. "Most black papers have to limit their circulation base because it is too costly to maintain far-flung distribution," says John "Rover" Jordan, acting publisher of the *Journal and Guide*. "We can't afford field men any longer, and transportation is too complicated and expensive. It is virtually impossible to provide adequate coverage of the national scene anyway."

Television has made inroads on black newspapers' readership—as it has on that of whites—and, because inner-city blacks are audio-oriented, black-focused radio has hurt, too. As one black editor in Chicago said: "The four black-oriented radio stations here reach more listeners in an hour than the black newspaper has readers in a month."

The limited expansion of black newspapers' advertising bases also is a problem. Although the *Afro-American* is among the fortunate few with no financial crisis, publisher John Murphy says, "We are really not able to get into the mainstream of the American economy. We just haven't been able to break through the institutionalized discrimination by advertisers." There has been "some success" in obtaining food copy, he says, but little in such fields as department store advertising. In fact, when Macy's started advertising in the New York *Amsterdam News* in 1965 the newspaper turned the milestone into a front-page headline. Similarly, officials of the Chicago *Daily Defender* did not try to hide their elation when Marshall Field & Company signed with them. "We are delighted, of course," says John H. Sengstacke, *Defender* publisher. "This is the first time Marshall Field has advertised in black media, and we've been after them for a long, long time."

Sengstacke, the nephew of the *Defender's* founder, Robert S. Abbott, has become the black

newspaper baron of the nation with ten papers. Now fifty-seven, he became president of the *Defender's* parent company after Abbott's death in 1940, turned the *Defender* into a daily in 1956, and in 1967 purchased the *Courier* chain. His main plant at 2400 South Michigan Avenue in Chicago is the best equipped of any black newspaper facility, and his papers circulate in every region but the West. In addition to the *Daily Defender* and *Michigan Chronicle*, they include: the *Chicago National Defender*, *Tri-State Defender* (Tennessee, Mississippi, Arkansas), *Georgia Courier*, *Pittsburgh Courier*, *Florida Courier*, *Ohio Courier*, *Philadelphia Courier*, *National Courier*.

Then there is the problem of recruitment. "It's hard getting people who are qualified," says C. B. Powell, seventy-four-year-old publisher of the *Amsterdam News*, "and that goes not only for reporters but in advertising and circulation and management as well. I tried three white advertising managers but it just didn't work out." The *Amsterdam News*, the only black paper with a Newspaper

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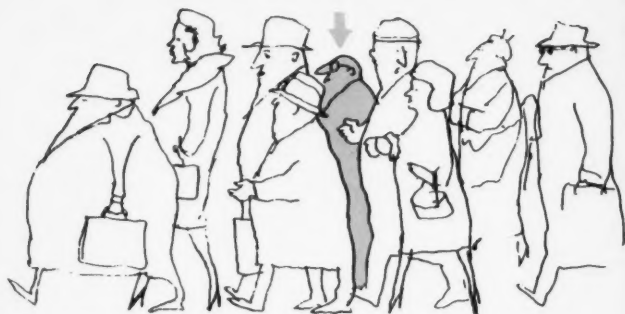
" 'It's hard to  
get people who  
are qualified...'"

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Guild contract, pays the highest average salaries, but even these are below the scale of metropolitan dailies. Echoing Powell, John Murphy of the *Afro-American* says the black press has "become the training ground for the white metropolitan newspapers and radio and television stations ever since they recognized that it is advantageous to have a black reporter or two on their staffs."

The dearth of qualified editorial personnel is reflected in the black press' basic staple—news. Black newspapers, recognizing that they are in no position to compete with the metropolitan press in coverage of black communities, are greedy for handouts. In many instances, the black newspaper seems to have thrown in the towel. The metropolitan press, however, concerns itself largely with the most dramatic and sensational aspects of black

LOST—in the daily mass of information?



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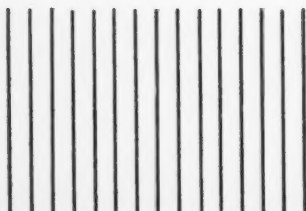
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life—conflict situations, militancy, unusual achievements of “celebrity blacks,” and, of course, crime. Because they have the resources available, white dailies—often with reporters hired from black newspapers—give lengthy coverage to such stories. Thus black readers look increasingly to metropolitan dailies for articles about blacks, even though their treatment may be suspect.

However, when it comes to routine coverage of black communities—social life, church activities, births, marriages, deaths, club and fraternal news, etc.—the black press has an open field and takes full advantage of its monopoly. As one black editor put it: “People like to see their names and their pictures in the paper. Just as sure as day follows night, the average black man or woman will never make the daily newspaper unless he commits a crime, and a serious one at that.”

This is why, for example, the *Chicago Courier*, which is rare in that it prints no crime news, in a recent twenty-page issue carried two full pages of business news, a page of entertainment notes, a generous amount of church and social news, and sixty-seven pictures. A sixteen-page edition of the Cincinnati *Herald* included two church pages, two sports pages, and one entertainment page, as well as a full page of pictures, all of different weddings. The *Afro-American* and Pittsburgh *Courier* routinely carry two or three pages of women's and society news. It is not unusual for black weeklies to devote two pages to school notes, crammed with names. Once the reader gets off the front page of a black newspaper, he is rarely confronted with hard news.

The front page of most black newspapers, however, are fairly predictable. Banner heads are likely to herald a crime or a racial issue. Typical banners in a recent week: in the *Chicago Daily Defender* weekend edition, E. CHICAGO HTS. RANGER TO DIE IN CHAIR; RAP SCHOOL OFFICIAL FOR STUDENT UNREST; in the *Journal and Guide*, FIRE KILLS 8; FATHER SAVES 3 BEFORE DYING; TROOPS PATROL AT VORHEES; in the *Louisiana Weekly*, COURT HITS RACISM IN ASBESTOS TRADES; INTRUDER SLAIN IN APPLIANCE STORE.

The black press dates to 1827, when John B. Russworm and the Rev. Samuel Cornish went to the editor of the old New York *Sun* and asked him

to run a story about a black organization to which they belonged. The editor is reported to have told them: “The *Sun* shines bright for all white men but never for the black man.” Rev. Cornish and Russworm walked out and founded the nation's first black newspaper, *Freedom's Journal*. It did not survive long, but the crusading spirit of its founders did.

Early black newspapers cried out against the injustices of slavery and, after emancipation, against the plight of the freedmen. Through the lynching years the black press protested loud and long. Robert S. Abbott and his *Chicago Defender* concentrated on the tortured life in the South

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## “Blacks look increasingly to the white dailies...”

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with such zeal that he contributed greatly to the northward migration of blacks beginning in World War I. During World War II the black press attacked and exposed discrimination against blacks in the armed forces. This relentless crusade led President Harry Truman to issue an executive order ending Jim Crow in the service. The first historic March on Washington in 1941 was dramatized almost exclusively by the black press. The direct result was President Franklin D. Roosevelt's executive order creating the first declaration for federal fair employment practices.

Today, with the black revolution at its zenith, the question is raised throughout the ghettos: where is the black press? The answer is that the established black press is squarely in the middle of a dilemma. It finds itself trying not to be too conservative for the black revolutionaries, and not too revolutionary for white conservatives upon whom it depends for advertising. Murphy of the *Afro-American* speaks candidly about the tightrope the black press walks: “Newspapers are small businesses and publishers are businessmen. Surely you'd have to describe black publishers as conservatives, I suppose. In earlier years, black news-

papers were spearheads of protest. Today we're much more informational."

Powell of the *Amsterdam News* concedes that "we have not kept up with the black revolution as we should have. But you've got to realize that we don't see our role as leaders. We are not out to revolutionize. When the *Amsterdam News* sees issues that are too revolutionary, we speak out against them." Louis Martin, vice president and editor of the Sengstacke Newspapers and the former deputy chairman of the National Democratic Committee, says the black press is "reflecting the rise in black awareness" but admits that "some of the older publishers were a little too slow responding." Now, he says, "even some of our most conservative black newspapers are bowing to the winds of change."

Many black readers wonder if "bowing to the winds of change" is enough. An editor in the Midwest says no. "Playing catch-up is not the name of the game," he declares. "The black revolution has left the black press behind. And one of the reasons is that in the good old days of the black press income came almost exclusively from circulation because there just wasn't any real advertising available. Today, the papers are picking up some pretty good accounts and, aside from wrestling with the increasingly complex economics of keeping a newspaper alive, black publishers have to make sure they don't become too revolutionary in tone for fear of losing those new white accounts."

William Robertson, assistant to publisher Leon Washington of the Los Angeles *Sentinel*, suggests another reason why the black press has relinquished its title of crusader: "I think we have lost much of our penchant for protest because we just don't have the staff to dig out the stories like we used to."

Some reporters on black newspapers, moreover, do not appear to have the dedication to the black cause which characterized black newsmen a couple of decades ago. A former reporter for the *Amsterdam News* was quoted in a *New York Times Magazine* article recently: "You don't feel that you have to stay working there like you do on some jobs because you're doing good works or really helping to change the community around you. It's just a

job. . . . You know the publisher's in it to make money, not to reform the black world and that kind of spirit pervades the place. When I was there, my attitude was what the hell, if he's in it for the money, I am, too."

This attitude parallels that of a reporter for a Chicago black newspaper who told this writer: "Look, man, you get tired of brothers and sisters bugging you on the street because your paper just isn't with The Movement. You know, one day our paper looks like it might be getting with it and the next day it sounds like the *Trib* [Chicago *Tribune*]."

Probably the classic example of the black press' ambivalence on militancy is the way it has reacted to the Black Panther Party. At first black papers tried to ignore the Panthers. As the Panthers' brand of activism stepped up to where it could not be overlooked, black newspapers, for the most part, reported their conflicts with police but consciously sought to hew a line that would not identify with the Panther ideology. About a year ago, after the Illinois Black Panther Party served notice that the Chicago *Daily Defender* "will have to become relevant or we will have to deal with it," the *Defender* began carrying more news about the Panthers—their breakfast-for-children program and other activities not tied to police confrontation. When Panther leader Fred Hampton was

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### "Numbers of small organizational papers now exist . . ."

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killed in December in a police raid on his Chicago apartment, black newspapers—like many white newspapers—took a new look at the Panthers and began questioning the role of the Establishment in dealing with this ultra-militant group.

How are less explosive issues handled in the black press today? An excellent insight is offered by Harold Barger, who has studied nine black newspapers in the Chicago area for a Northwestern University Ph.D. dissertation. Though there may

be isolated differences in black newspapers' handling of news across the nation, Barger's findings apply generally to the established black press. He found two news areas in which there was what he called "an almost total negative image": the Nixon Administration and police activity in black communities.

"Virtually all of the references to Nixon are negative," Barger says. "This is not entirely surprising. Yet it is significant that references to the federal government tend to be favorable. It is when the references are made in more specific terms—the Nixon Administration, the Justice Department, etc.—that the bitterness shows through. Blacks tend to respect the basic traditions of this government—the rhetoric of American democracy, so to speak—and yet they clearly see their own identification as that of second-class citizenship."

Barger sees this apparent ambivalence toward the federal government as a paradox, yet it is easily explained since blacks have always looked to the federal government as their "hope." When the arms of the federal government are viewed individually, they show blatant failures to implement the American promise. Put another way, what Barger affirms is that black newspapers reflect blacks' general support of the American system, but record their readers' beliefs that the system is not working. (References to the Supreme Court were usually positive, but stories on housing, real estate men, jobs, labor unions, and the education, health, and welfare systems had negative images.) The most consistent positive theme Barger found was black unity, allied with the call for community control, particularly of schools. At the same time, he found black newspapers encouraging integration as a means of shaping a kind of society in which both blacks and whites can live in harmony.

These are, indeed, the general images which reflect from the established black press—that segment of the black newspaper institution which publishes as much for commercial motives as others. But there is a bold new dimension in the black press in the form of the organizational newspaper that in some instances is a profit-making venture but in all instances is a propaganda instrument. These papers are appearing all over the

#### TWENTY-FIVE BLACK NEWSPAPERS

Newspaper	City	Circulation (1969)
Muhammad Speaks	Chicago	400,000+*
Black Panther	San Francisco	110,000*
Afro-American	Baltimore	119,902
Amsterdam News	New York City	82,123
Michigan Chronicle	Detroit	72,776
Pittsburgh Courier	Pittsburgh	64,276
Mirror	St. Louis	51,500
Sentinel	Los Angeles	41,482
Defender	Chicago	36,194** 33,673
Herald-Dispatch	Los Angeles	29,500
Journal and Guide	Norfolk	29,213
Call & Post	Cleveland	29,183
Daily World	Atlanta	25,000
Post Tribune	Dallas	24,000
Greater Milwaukee Star	Milwaukee	24,000
Informer	Washington, D.C.	24,000
Chicago Courier	Chicago	23,670
Indiana Herald	Indianapolis	23,481
Carolina Times	Durham, N.C.	22,004
Tri-State Defender	Memphis	22,000
Sentinel	St. Louis	21,648
Star-News	Jacksonville, Fla.	18,758
Louisiana Weekly	New Orleans	17,800
Call	Kansas City, Mo.	16,639
Black Dispatch	Oklahoma City	15,300

\*Unaudited publisher estimates; sources all others, *Editor & Publisher International Yearbook*.

\*\*Weekend edition; other figure, M-Th.

nation, especially in major urban areas, and they are having an impact on their readers and on the established black press. One thing sets them apart—militancy.

Two such papers, national in scope with circulations that outstrip virtually all other black news-

papers, are *Muhammad Speaks*, published in Chicago by the Black Muslims, and the *Black Panther*, printed in San Francisco by the Black Panther Party. *Muhammad Speaks*—by far the largest of any black newspaper—has a press run of 498,000, indicating a circulation figure of well over 400,000. It is published in the Black Muslims' modern \$1.5-million-dollar offset plant. The Panthers' tabloid, according to Black Panther Chief of Staff David Hilliard, sells 110,000 weekly. Significantly, neither paper depends on advertising for revenue and both are sold enthusiastically by members on street corners. Both are remarkably alike in approach, though not in ideology: each issue of the *Black Panther* carries the party

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### *"The black press' survival does not now appear threatened..."*

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platform and its 10-point program; each edition of *Muhammad Speaks* runs the Muslims' program, also a 10-point platform.

*Muhammad Speaks*, which sells for 15 cents in Illinois and 20 cents elsewhere, runs stories under such headlines as THE SLAVE TRADE, WHITE EXPLOITERS BUILD NUCLEAR ARSENAL IN AFRICA, LINK STRUGGLE OF U. S. BLACKS, VIETNAMESE, as well as numerous messages from Elijah Muhammad, "Messenger of Allah." There also are reports from various Black Muslim Mosques. Only about half of the editorial staff is Muslim, and most top editors are trained in journalism. The acting editor in Chicago—the base for thirty-two staff members—is a Harvard graduate; the New York editor is an alumnus of the Columbia Graduate School of Journalism. Although the newspaper subscribes to United Press International, it does not use much UPI material, depending more on news contacts in key cities and lifting and rewriting of material from other black newspapers. The paper has an office in Cairo and is opening another one soon in London.

The staff of the *Black Panther*—which sells for

25 cents a copy—is mostly volunteer, depending heavily on reports from Ministers of Information in Panther chapters. The paper's pages are saturated with Panther-police confrontations, progress reports on trials involving Panthers, and activities such as free breakfast and health programs. Typical *Black Panther* headlines scream: BLACK YOUTH MURDERED IN COLD BLOOD BY RACIST S.F. PIG; "RAP" BROWN LAW PUT TO USE BY POWER STRUCTURE; MOZAMBIQUE GUERRILLAS DETERMINED TO CARRY ARMED STRUGGLE THROUGH TO THE END; THE ANATOMY OF EXTERMINATION, A POLITICAL ASSASSINATION.

The fact that these two papers consistently circulate in figures far larger than their memberships affirms that there is a market for the more militant, anti-establishment black newspaper. Indeed, sizeable but unknown numbers of small organizational newspapers are now in existence, with an undetermined but obviously significant aggregate circulation: in Chicago, for example, the bi-weekly *Black Truth* circulates 30,000; the bi-weekly *Torch* 15,000; the weekly *Observer* 25,000; the monthly *Black Liberator* 10,000; and the monthly *Black Women's Committee News* 5,000.

The established black publishers look warily on these militant organs. Sengstacke Newspapers' Martin comments: "It's the same story in every city I've been in. The big weeklies apparently are not able to give these organizations and their points of view the kind of attention they demand." Because they are subsidized by organizations they are less dependent on advertising; and the editors—generally untrained in journalism but committed to the militant black cause—exercise wide freedom in their "news" presentation, which has great appeal to blacks who want action along with words.

Whether the established black press will move more in this direction remains to be seen. But its survival does not appear to be threatened. Publishers, though expressing mixed feelings about their individual futures, agree on that. "As long as there is white racism, we'll have black newspapers," Martin says. "But there is no question about it, we have to change our points of view and presentation of the news as the demands of black people are recognized. We'll have to if we are to be relevant."



## Should newsmen accept PR prizes?

DAVID ZINMAN

Are all journalistic awards the same, or might some tend to compromise recipients' independence? A C/R survey of a seldom discussed problem.

"The way to treat newspapermen is to treat them often."  
—Anonymous.

■ I was co-winner last year of the \$500 Empire State Award for medical reporting—at least for thirty-one days. On the thirty-second day I gave back the money. It wasn't the easiest decision I have made in fifteen years as a newspaperman. I had already spent the prize money, which had been provided by the New York Medical Society, the state branch of the American Medical Association. (The Society co-sponsors the award with the New York State Health Department.) But when the check came it raised a painful question. Wasn't I, after all, taking money from an interest group, a politically oriented doctor's union whose activities I was supposed to write about "objectively?"

The award described my stories as a "significant contribution to public health and medicine." But they had all been articles favorable to medicine and the cause of the AMA. Even if the group's motives were unblemished—and I do not say that they were not—it was hard not to wonder if the prize was in effect money doled out by a lobbying group for stories promoting the image of doctors.

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David Zinman, who is on the staff of *Newsday*, is an Advanced Science Writing Fellow at Columbia.

What I was reacting against is a subtle, sometimes difficult-to-pinpoint public relations technique whose influence extends far beyond my insignificant award. *Editor & Publisher* lists more than 130 prize contests for newsmen, and this is not an all-inclusive list. The names of the award-giving groups read like a national lobbyists convention. Prizes are given by doctors, truckers, airlines, travel associations, insurance agencies, lawyers, osteopaths, shoe firms, dog-food manufacturers, religious groups, scientists, and tax-exempt foundations—to name a few. They offer awards ranging from a plaque to \$2,500 [see page 38].

One group, the Cigar Institute of America, offers press photographers fifteen cash prizes totaling \$4,000. "Put a cigar in your photograph," the Cigar Institute says in its ad soliciting entries, "and you might win [first prize money of] \$1,500." That is \$500 more than the winner of the Pulitzer Prize gets. At least one photographer has taken the ad at its word: when *Miami News* photographers won first and second (\$750) prizes last year, editor Sylvan Meyer told the *Columbia Journalism Review*, one photo was staged. The winning entry showed a professional football player smoking a cigar while warming the bench; the runnerup depicted a bathing beauty puffing away. "The pictures certainly were commercial," said Meyer, "although the one I object to was the one

that purposely included a cigar." Meyer, who was not editor at the time, did not say which photo was rigged.

Would *News* readers now wonder if future cigar-smoking pictures will be influenced by the prize? "There aren't going to be any more cigar pictures," said Meyer.

It is not fair to question the legitimacy of all industry-sponsored contests. Many companies say that they are concerned about the paucity of good reporting about their field and the public's consequent misinformation or lack of knowledge about their activities. It follows that these firms believe that if the public is better informed it will feel more positive toward them. But journalism contests have proliferated so rapidly that by their sheer weight of numbers they tend to reduce the meaning and importance of all news awards. At the same time some have been around so long that they are looked on uncritically and accepted as a fringe benefit of newspaper work.

Most newsmen would agree that prizes like the Pulitzer, Sigma Delta Chi, and George Polk awards, and contests run by local press clubs, make a contribution to better reporting. But many contests are not administered by journalism groups. More than 40 per cent of the awards listed in *E&P* come from interest groups—commercial and professional organizations—or from foundations or groups funded by public contributions. Again, not every one of these organizations conceived its contest for ulterior reasons. But the danger is that these groups, instead of objectively singling out journalistic excellence, are more likely to reward stories favorable to their cause.

What makes some groups' motives particularly suspect is: 1) some have never given awards to critical stories; 2) some put their own company's men on judging panels; and 3) some fly newsmen to awards presentations, wine and dine them (and sometimes their wives), and pay all expenses. So the question can be raised, is the real objective of contests run by interest groups to improve reporting? Or is it to cement closer ties with the press, polish the groups' image, and grind their axes?

Because sponsors have woven the news media and newsmen into the basic fabric of their promotions the contests have largely gone unexamined.

### What They Offer

**\$2,500** — Albert and Mary Lasker Foundation (for medical stories), H. Hentz & Company brokers (for financial writing).

**\$2,000** — American Chemical Society.

**\$1,500** — Cigar Institute of America, John Hancock Mutual Life Insurance Company, American Institute of Physics-United States Steel Foundation.

**\$1,000** — American Medical Association, American Dental Association, American Academy of General Practice, the Arthritis Foundation, the American Trucking Associations, Westinghouse and the American Association for the Advancement of Science, J. C. Penney-University of Missouri (best women's pages, fashion reporting, etc.), National Association of Engine and Boating Manufacturers, National Society of Professional Engineers.

**\$250** — American Association of Petroleum Landmen.

**\$200** — Trans World Airlines

**\$100** — American Osteopathic Association, Gaines Dog Research Center.

—Editor & Publisher Yearbook.

Who would probe their motives and operations? Not the reporters who swell their slim purses with four-figure cash prizes—sums that often equal a tenth or more of their annual paycheck. Certainly not the editors who publicize their winners—no matter how commercial and meaningless the context—in news stories and house ads. The *New York Times*, for example, ran a full-page house ad last year promoting its "gallery of . . . writers . . . who have won professional awards for jobs exceptionally well done." Alongside pictures of winners of the Sigma Delta Chi and the Overseas Press Club awards the *Times* ran a picture of its travel editor, who got the Trans World Airlines Award for articles on the travel industry. Other pictures showed reporters who received prizes from the American Furniture Mart and the American Chemical Society. Two award winners who were not shown—their prizes came after the ad appeared—were photographers who won \$50 cash prizes from the Cigar Institute.

Like many newspapers, the *Times* had no set policy on industry-sponsored contests. Nor had its managing editor given the subject much attention. "It's an interesting point, but I've never really thought about it," A. M. Rosenthal, a 1960 Pulitzer Prize-winner who became managing editor

last September, told me in a recent interview. "I've thought about almost every other ethical question under the sun. And we have strict rules about them. But we have none, as far as I know, about taking awards from TWA . . . or something like that." Prizes, Rosenthal added, were not one of his "really major problems." Rosenthal was shown the *Times*' promotional ad and then asked about his photographers' awards from the Cigar Institute. He said he had never heard of the Cigar Institute contest nor been aware that *Times* men had won awards.

A few days later Rosenthal phoned to say the *Times* had decided to examine all prizes for which its reporters compete. He acknowledged that the *CJR* interview had raised questions "that are extremely pertinent and to which we haven't given enough attention." The *Times*, he said, would in each case look at the source of the award and the method of selecting winners.

Depending on the paper, contest entries are submitted by the promotion departments (which often do elaborate jobs), editors, or the reporter himself. If the reporter enters, sometimes he clears it with his boss, sometimes he doesn't. If the paper enters for the reporter, sometimes it tells him, sometimes it doesn't. Because many editors, like Rosenthal, have paid little attention to press contests, awards never have become a serious issue. Nevertheless, when asked about it many editors voiced strong opinions.

"I damned near get sick when I hear of newspapermen accepting cash prizes from groups whose activities they report," says Norman E. Isaacs, president of the American Society of Newspaper Editors. "Everybody wants to use the press for something—and this . . . comes close to bribery." But Isaacs, who says he is speaking for himself as editor of the *Louisville Courier-Journal* and *Times*, adds that he thinks there is little editors can do about it.

Charles B. Seib, managing editor of the *Washington Evening Star*, believes that getting a prize from a group whose activities a newsman covers can't help putting a reporter in an ambivalent position toward that group—at least in the public's eyes. "I also think that groups offering awards—and by this I mean trade associations and the like

—do it for less than altruistic motives . . .," Seib says. "There is no question that the major non-commercial awards—the Pulitzer, the [Raymond J.] Clapper, the [Heywood] Broun—serve the cause of journalism. But I think we probably should take a much closer look at some of the other awards which have a purely commercial or semi-commercial purpose."

On the other hand, Nick Williams, executive vice president and editor of the *Los Angeles*

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### *"Editors should scrutinize each contest and define limits..."*

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*Times*, doubts that prizes present a real threat to a reporter's objectivity. "It's difficult for me to believe," Williams says, "that any worthwhile reporter goes about his work in the anticipation of receiving some sort of possible cash prize. Or that his work is affected in any way by the possibility of such a prize."

Clayton Kirkpatrick, editor of the *Chicago Tribune*, agrees. "Good writers with a capacity to win prizes for excellence cannot be bought cheaply," Kirkpatrick says. "Good writers also have no compunction about biting the hand that rewards them if they suspect the reward demeans them."

Not so, says 1965 Pulitzer Prize-winner Gene Goltz, now a Nieman Fellow, of the *Detroit Free Press*. "Some years ago I felt that reporters could be incorruptible," Goltz says. "A few still are. But I have found and seen time and again where it is very, very difficult to write biting truths about any group whose largesse you may have been receiving in any way. . . . I'm sure the PR men in those organizations know this. And I'm sure that is one of the prime reasons for such contests. But I honestly feel that newspaper management is so aware of the lousy salaries they pay their reporters that they wouldn't dare deny them the chance to earn a little prize money."

To try to get a clearer reading of attitudes I sent a questionnaire on contests to 300 editors and

reporters, representing at least one paper in every state. Returns came from 128 newsmen. Some of the key responses [see page 42 for details]:

—68 per cent of those answering said they felt that, over-all, prizes contributed to better reporting; 31 per cent said "no"; 1 per cent said they didn't know.

—72 per cent thought newsmen should *not* accept cash prizes from groups whose activities they regularly cover; 28 per cent said it was not inappropriate.

—60 per cent said reporters should *not* take cash prizes from commercial groups; 25 per cent approved; 15 per cent said they didn't know.

Certainly the problem presented by awards is most clearly visible in industry-run contests where the ends of journalism and of public relations can run counter to each other. What chance has the enterprising or investigative reporter whose story casts an award-sponsoring group's activities in an unfavorable light—no matter how good his story? And if the probing, hard-hitting story isn't recognized, what genuine value does the contest have?

A spokesman for TWA, which has sponsored its contest for thirty-three years, is candid about the purpose of its competition. "The purpose is to *promote* air travel and air tourism," says Herbert A. Richardson, TWA's director of editorial services. "If somebody says the 707 is a lousy plane, that doesn't promote air travel or air tourism. Why would the judges go out of their way to give a prize to a critical article?" Nevertheless Richardson says that the contest does draw some critical entries, and a few have won awards. He could not name any, he said, because TWA kept no file of winners.

Until two years ago, Richardson adds, a TWA senior vice president served as one of the three contest judges. His place has since been taken by a journalism professor, and all three judges are now journalism school professors. The TWA executive was replaced only because he retired, Richardson says, and there was "no particular reason" for not filling the vacancy with another company

#### THE CIGAR INSTITUTE'S CONTEST

□ "When your ad says, 'Put a cigar in your photograph . . .,' aren't you suggesting that photographers stage news photos?" I asked Ted Cott, executive director of the Cigar Institute of America. In the Institute's modern headquarters on New York's Avenue of the Americas, Cott leaned back beneath a large framed photograph of former President Kennedy smoking a cigar. After a fifteen-second pause he said, "I suppose you could interpret it that way. But if it's a published picture, then a photo editor has decided it has general news value. . . . From a public relations view, one of the values of our contest is that a photographer coming across a news scene might include a guy with a cigar where he might not have taken such a picture before. And I don't mean handing a guy a cigar."

The Cigar Institute's contest, which has run for twenty-four years, drew 200 entries last year, Cott said. Money for the winners, whose pictures are republished in trade journals, photography magazines, and in the Institute's internal publications, comes from the Institute's promotion budget. "We feel the contest has a public relations value," Cott said. "It puts them (photographers) in a frame of mind to think positively of cigar photos rather than negatively."

Toward the end of the interview, Cott mentioned the Institute's contest ad again. "By the way," he said, "we're not going to run that ad any more." What was the reason? "It has nothing to do with this dialogue." Why then? "We just want to change it." No other reason? "No other reason."

—D. Z.

man. "As a matter of fact, I see no reason why there couldn't be three TWA judges. It's our contest, isn't it?"

TWA winners get only \$100 and a chance at another \$100 sweepstake prize, but they are eligible for a five-day, all-expense-paid winter trip to Arizona, where the presentation ceremony is held. The awards dinner is a climax of TWA's annual Arizona press tour, in which aviation writers, including contest winners, "explore and report on" the Southwest's tourist attractions. Why Arizona? "We don't do much business in Miami," Richardson says. "So this is our way of pushing the Southwest, an area TWA flies to."

Daniel Pennington, a press relations official who supervises the American Trucking Association's \$5,400 contest, says he knows of no winning entries critical of the trucking industry submitted in the past three years—as far back as his experience



goes. "Let's be frank," Pennington says. "Not too many reporters are going to submit an entry to us and be too critical—although if one won we'd treat him just like any other entry." That means a \$1,000 first prize and an all-expense-paid trip to the nation's capital, where the ATA has home offices. Wives are guests, too. "You could come to Washington without a penny in your pocket," Pennington says, "and have no concern."

Asked about his reaction to ATA influence after winning the trucking prize last year, William Saunderson, reporter for the Portland *Oregonian*, said the answer he started to give sounded like a primer on morals or a brief for the defense. "So I'll boil it all down to one sentence. The reporter who can be compromised will be compromised."

The issue of contest ethics becomes grayer when the groups involved are professional associations. Some professional men selflessly devote their lives to humanitarian causes, and their societies have their own code of ethics. At the same time, doctors, lawyers, and dentists—like businessmen—have their own special interests and powerful lobbies. Despite this, 62 per cent of newspapermen responding to the questionnaire said reporters could accept these awards in good conscience. (Twenty-eight per cent said they shouldn't; 10 per cent, that they "didn't know.")

Bernard F. Kroeger, director of program services for the American Medical Association, says that no awards were made for critical stories in last year's contest. But he says he cannot comment beyond that because the AMA keeps no record of winning stories in its seven-year-old contest. However, he adds, the number of entries critical of doctors, medicine, or medical societies is small. Kroeger also says that "one or two" doctors served on last year's panel of fifteen judges, and that their function was to check stories for "medical accuracy."

Mildred Spencer, medical reporter for the Buffalo *Evening News* and an AMA winner, says she submitted "a couple" of stories critical of the AMA in her prize-winning scrapbook of over-all work for the year. But when asked for samples, she said it was impossible to "dig out these stories at this late date."

A spokesman for the American Osteopathic As-

sociation says that in the thirteen years of its contest it has never given an award to a critical story—indeed, that it had never gotten a critical entry. The osteopaths average about fifteen entries per year for their three \$100 prizes. Patrick Butler, the AOA's media representative, says the association hasn't been able to overcome the widespread feeling that unless a story is good propaganda it has no chance of winning.

Sometimes a professional group co-sponsors an award with a commercial firm. The American Association for the Advancement of Science, for instance, co-sponsors a science writing award with

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### *"Contest ties to commercial interests should be cut..."*

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Westinghouse; AAAS administers the contest, and Westinghouse puts up the cash prize (\$1,000). In return, Westinghouse gets a free plug each time the name of the award or contest appears in print—it is called the "Westinghouse Science Writing Award." The arrangement has been questioned sporadically by some members of the National Association of Science Writers, who submit most of the newspaper entries. But neither AAAS President Athelstan Spilhaus nor NASW President Jean Pearson of the Detroit *News* feels that Westinghouse sponsorship gives a commercial aspect to the award. "It could," she says, "if the contest isn't administered properly. But ours is."

No Westinghouse officials serve on the contest screening group or judging panel, she points out. However, two members of Westinghouse's public relations staff are on the AAAS management committee that makes the rules and names the screening group and judges. For years Westinghouse also paid the tab for science writers at the newsmen's own NASW annual dinner, where the awards are presented, but that arrangement ended last year: in a show of independence the writers decided to pay their own way—at \$10 a head. Now Westing-

## Newsman's Attitudes Toward Cash Awards

□ Reporters and editors gave their opinions about newswriting prizes in a mail questionnaire sent to 300 newsmen in fifty states. One-third work on the nation's largest papers; one-third on small and medium-sized papers; one-third on papers in the state capitals. Replies came from 128 newsmen. On some questions space was provided for comment. To encourage frankness, newsmen were told their names would not be used. Here is their response and a sampling of their views.

*Editor & Publisher* lists more than 100 awards given annually to newspapermen. Which ones do you think reporters can accept in good conscience?

1. Awards from newspaper and journalism groups (like local press clubs and Sigma Delta Chi) and from educational institutions (like Columbia University for the Pulitzer Prize and Long Island University for the Polk Awards)?

Reporters:	Yes	63	No	0
Editors:	Yes	65	No	0
Consensus:	Yes	100%	No	0

2. Awards from philanthropic groups financed by public contributions like the American Heart Association, the National Kidney Foundation, and the Arthritis Foundation?

Reporters:	Yes	37	No	17	Don't Know	9
Editors:	Yes	48	No	14	Don't Know	3
Consensus:	Yes	65%	No	24%	Don't Know	11%

3. Awards from such groups as the American Medical Association, the American Dental Association, and the American Bar Association?

Reporters:	Yes	35	No	20	Don't Know	8
Editors:	Yes	44	No	17	Don't Know	4
Consensus:	Yes	62%	No	28%	Don't Know	10%

4. Awards from such groups as Trans World Airlines, the American Trucking Association, and the J. C. Penney Co.?

Reporters:	Yes	14	No	37	Don't Know	10
Editors:	Yes	18	No	39	Don't Know	8
Consensus:	Yes	25%	No	60%	Don't Know	15%

5. Do you know of a case where a reporter's objectivity has been impaired by his winning an award?

Reporters:	Yes	5	No	54	Don't Know	0
Editors:	Yes	6	No	59	Don't Know	0
Consensus:	Yes	9%	No	91%	Don't Know	0%

6. Do you know of a case where a reporter has written stories to win a prize?

Reporters:	Yes	17	No	43	Don't Know	0
Editors:	Yes	12	No	48	Don't Know	0
Consensus:	Yes	24%	No	76%	Don't Know	0%

7. Should newsmen accept cash prizes from groups whose activities they regularly report (i.e., AMA for medical writers; TWA for travel writers)?

Reporters:	Yes	15	No	36	Don't Know	0
Editors:	Yes	14	No	40	Don't Know	0
Consensus:	Yes	28%	No	72%	Don't Know	0%

Comment:

"Good God, no."

—Editor, Washington.

"If they do, then obviously everything they write about that organization is suspect. And when a newsman creates his own credibility gap that way he is no longer a valuable newsman."

—Reporter, Lafayette, Ind.

"A prize in a bonafide competition should be harmless to competent reporters."

—Reporter, Norfolk, Va.

"Accepting such prizes is little more than a bribe."

—Editor, Michigan.

8. Would winning a cash prize put a reporter in an ambivalent position toward a prize-awarding group, should that group later become a subject of controversy?

Reporters:	Yes	20	No	25	Don't Know	0
Editors:	Yes	15	No	32	Don't Know	1
Consensus:	Yes	38%	No	62%	Don't Know	0%

Comment:

"It shouldn't. But it might. Even with the most honorable intentions, it's hard to be wholly dispassionate if you've been paid off. If you don't pull your punches, you become overzealous just to show you're not bought."

—Reporter, Washington, D.C.

"If winning an award influences a reporter in any way in his handling of news, he and the newspaper business will both be better off if he gets out and goes to selling insurance, or driving a truck, or something else."

—Reporter, Tampa, Fla.

"A vast majority of reporters cannot be bought, even by subtle means. But there is no doubt in my mind that receiving an award from a given organization predisposes a reporter to be lenient in his attitude toward that organization."

—Editor, New York City.

9. Over-all, do awards contribute to better journalism?

Reporters:	Yes	36	No	15	Don't Know	2
Editors:	Yes	36	No	17	Don't Know	0
Consensus:	Yes	68%	No	31%	Don't Know	1%

Comment:

"Yes. But the great number of awards tends to lessen the value of all."

—Reporter, Akron, O.

"They (reporters) have responded positively to the honor and added prestige, with cash being nice but incidental. I feel it adds to their status as professionals."

—Wisconsin editor.

"There are far too many awards, and most of them have become meaningless except to the people who receive them. Even some of the people who receive them do so with some embarrassment. . . . Personally, I'd like to see awards reduced to a handful: the Pulitzer, George Polk, Sigma Delta Chi, and local press associations and newspaper guilds."

—New York City editor

house pays only for the pre-dinner cocktail party.

The ethics of newswriting contests become even less distinct when voluntary health agencies and similar groups financed by public contributions are involved. The goals of such organizations—the American Heart Association, for example—seem unassailable. But fund-raising groups have been known to go astray in their competition for the public dollar and in their use of money they raise. Nevertheless 65 per cent of those answering the mail survey saw no objection to taking cash awards from these groups. Only 24 per cent said “no”; 11 per cent didn’t know.

One who agrees with the dissenters is Harriet Zuckerman, assistant professor of sociology at Columbia University, who has published two studies of Nobel Prize-winners. “The American Heart Association sounds thoroughly innocent,” Mrs. Zuckerman says. “Criticizing it would be to fall in the same category as criticizing mothers, dogs, and horses. But the AHA might in the next ten years get involved in some controversial situation which might warrant critical coverage. . . . Were I to know when reading a story that a reporter had already gotten a prize of a substantial amount of money from the group I would be skeptical of what I was reading. I would certainly read his work with a different eye than I would read someone else’s story.”

Ira Sherman, the AHA’s public relations director, who administers the association’s contest, says he does not share Mrs. Zuckerman’s concern. “For a lousy \$500, it [the award] isn’t going to buy anyone off,” Sherman says. “We’ve never run into this problem and never anticipate it. . . . Now I think the question might be more serious with the Tobacco Institute.”

Sherman says he and members of his public relations staff have themselves in past years screened entries and eliminated “the hopeless stuff.” This year some of the judges will be involved because, Sherman says, “judges should participate in this.” About a dozen judges, including as many as four doctors (“to evaluate medical content”), pick the winners. “We don’t publicize the judges,” Sherman says. “It gives losers someone to write complaints to. It makes it more objective if you don’t promote the judges.”

Not surprisingly, 100 per cent of the 128 editors and reporters participating in the survey voted in favor of contests by press groups and journalism schools. This is not to say that news awards like the Pulitzer are immune to criticism. It does say distinctly that journalists believe they are standing on firmest ground when they are honored by their peers.

What attitude should responsible newsmen take about the other three categories—industry-sponsored prizes, awards from professional groups, and prizes from publicly funded organizations? These suggestions seem in order:

1) Editors should scrutinize each contest their promotion departments and reporters enter and define awards that are clearly outside the limits of propriety. This demarcation line might vary from paper to paper, but it would be a start toward a considered policy in an area to which little thought has been devoted.

2) Until this is done, if a paper believes a reporter has won a dubious prize it should let him return the money or give it to charity and then pay him the equivalent. If it approves his trip to a presentation ceremony the paper should pay expenses.

3) Writers groups should divest themselves of contest ties with commercial interests and give their own awards. This probably means that prizes would be plaques rather than cash. But the important point is winning recognition from one’s peers, and this has the most meaning when done free of the green umbilical cord of public relations.

4) In the end it really is up to each reporter to regulate his conduct, and every newsmen should take a serious look at contests offering to reward his talent with cash. He should consider the subtle influences to which he might be subjecting himself if he wins, and he should be particularly careful about accepting cash prizes from groups about which he regularly writes. As one Washington newsmen declared on his survey form, “If such writing isn’t being paid off, it appears to be. And that’s more than enough for Caesar’s wife.”

The subject matter of newspaper travel pages may be colorful, but when it comes to journalistic ethics most must be colored gray.

## The fantasy world of travel sections

STANFORD N. SESSER

■ With the initiation of the Boeing 747 jumbo jet, the doubling in the Sixties of the number of Americans spending vacations overseas, and myriad problems associated with a travel boom, it seems particularly urgent that attention be given one of the most woefully inadequate areas of American journalism—the newspaper travel section. It is almost axiomatic that a person choosing a vacation spot relies for advice on friends and travel agents, not on the various pieces of puffery sandwiched in most Sunday papers between ads for Florida hotels and three-week-Puerto Rican-vacations-for-two-from \$87. This could be attributed to a natural defense mechanism that sets in after the thousand-and-first description of smiling natives, swaying palm trees, and sumptuous Hilton hotels that always “exemplify the unique culture” of each foreign land. But now with travel such big business and with millions of Americans visiting distant points, it becomes relevant to ask why travel can’t be reported in a considerably more professional and probing fashion than it is.

While most other parts of a newspaper make at least some attempt to come to grips with reality, most travel sections determinedly seek to avoid it.

Words like “dictatorship,” “racism,” and “poverty” don’t exist; they are avoided almost as assiduously as “bad weather,” “expensive,” and “grotesque.” Publicity releases are passed off as news, and reporters or syndicated columnists write glowing descriptions of airlines, hotels, and vacation spots while somehow failing to mention that the subjects of their articles have paid all the bills for their trip. Moreover, the style of travel writing too often resembles that of the publicity man, where nothing is allowed to be beautiful and optimistic unless couched in the clichés of hack writing.

In some cases it might almost be suspected that newspapers lay down an edict that travel articles be so dull as not to distract from the ads. Take one Sunday’s travel articles in the *Newark News*: of a total of nine, six were releases from airlines, travel agencies, or state tourist departments. They included AMERICAN EXPRESS WILL SHOW MOVIE ON EUROPE, PAN AM INAUGURATES 747 SERVICE TO PUERTO RICO, and ALASKA TRAVEL DIVISION OFFERING HIGHWAY MAP. The seventh was a short unattributed puff about the island of Curaçao, describing “the crystal clear water, blue skies, and powdery white sand, along with an occasional seagull to break the solitude.” (We will hear more about Curaçao later; when a hot, arid island dotted with oil storage tanks is struck by rioting, as Curaçao was last summer, that is a sure sign

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Stanford N. Sesser, a *Wall Street Journal* reporter, recently investigated the travel beat on assignment for his newspaper.



travel writers will be flocking in, usually on free junkets, to assure everyone it ain't necessarily so.) The eighth Newark *News* article, carrying the byline of a staff reporter, urged vacationers to visit Sarasota, Fla., which, he wrote, is "on the verge of rediscovery, this time by modern tourists." Finally, there was a column by the *News*' travel editor on Expo '70—consisting solely of an interview with the director of the Japan National Tourist Organization's New York office.

Only a few voices in the newspaper industry have reacted against such pap. One is Norman E. Isaacs, outspoken editor of the Louisville *Courier-Journal* and a man who takes the concept of "ethics" and "standards" seriously. About two years ago Isaacs' paper dropped a syndicated travel columnist when Isaacs discovered that the writer was taking free junkets to the faraway spots he described in his columns; and recently the paper reduced its travel section to a couple of pages of ads

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*"Words like 'racism,'  
'dictatorship,' 'poverty'  
don't exist . . ."*

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and assigned its travel writer to other duties. "The big question in my mind is why travel can't be handled like all other news," Isaacs declares. "I never see anything that comes close to being criticism. It's all, 'Oh, gee whiz.' I'd never read one of those damn things to tell me where to travel."

Dropping a travel section is scarcely the ideal solution, but it does indicate the depth of the problem. Even the handful of newspapers that pay all expenses of their travel editors—they include the Los Angeles *Times*, the Washington *Post*, and the New York *Times*—still don't attempt to enforce on their travel sections the high standards that exist for the rest of the paper. For example, Los Angeles *Times* travel editor Jerry Hulse is widely considered to be the best in the country; his stories are frequently critical, and the paper spends \$20,000 a year to finance his travels. Yet the Los Angeles *Times* travel section still contains

scattered publicity releases disguised as articles. One such article begins: "For a swinging vacation with a 'Latin' flavor, Henry Miele Travel Service recommends Matson's *SS Monterey* cruises to the Mexican Riviera this spring." And the paper also uses syndicated columnist Richard Joseph, who often mentions airlines without noting that he flew on them free.

Not every travel writer is happy with the junketeering. "I'd love to pick up and go anyplace, but my paper just wouldn't agree to it," says Bill Hughes of the Cleveland *Press*, a highly profitable link in the Scripps-Howard chain. Bruce Hamby of the Denver *Post*, who has persuaded his paper to finance most of his travel, declares, "I fight like hell; I don't want to take any free trips at all." When Hamby does accept something free he mentions that fact in a box accompanying the article.

Not very many travel editors, however, are making this fight. Virtually all are over forty years old and veterans of years or decades of city-room reporting, and few are eager to risk an enjoyable job by requesting a \$20,000 expense account. If there is to be an initiative for better travel reporting, it will have to come from a realization by newspaper management that today's travel sections alienate both readers, who skip over them because of the puffery, and advertisers, who thereby get a lower readership response.

The New York *Times*, whose Sunday travel section has a staff of twelve and can encompass forty or fifty pages, also offers an illustration of some deficiencies in travel writing. While the *Times* travel section has done excellent articles such as reports on the complexity of airline fares and chaotic customs procedures at Kennedy Airport, most of the section still seems to picture the world as a sort of giant museum that exists for the benefit of American tourists. The articles on foreign countries not only ignore political and sociological factors generally but also tend to gloss over anything negative. When something unfavorable happens in the travel field that can't be overlooked, such as this year's disastrous New Orleans Mardi Gras or the dropoff this past winter in Florida tourism, the event is recorded in the general news columns rather than the travel section.

Last fall, for example, four months after serious

riots in Curaçao, Hyman Maidenber, a *Times* Latin American reporter, visited the island for a travel article. It is now safe for tourists to return, Maidenber stated, and he recalled:

This reporter remembers tourists telling him at the time how Negroes escorted frightened foreigners back to their hotels that Friday afternoon. Some tourists, who thought they were being abused verbally on the streets, realized later in calmer moments that they were being advised to go to their hotels in *papiamento*, the local patois.

All this may have been true, but the travel article omitted mention that on Monday, June 2, four days after the rioting began, the same Maidenber had reported in the *Times'* news columns that "hundreds of tourists—many of them Americans—have been trapped in hotel lobbies since Thursday night waiting for outbound transportation." Also, that "some 70 per cent of the resort's businesses have been destroyed or damaged." While a visitor would be pleased to know he is safe in Curaçao, he might also wonder about the attention given to underlying grievances which had led to the rioting—unless he wanted to gamble on spending four days of his vacation sleeping in a hotel lobby. In addition, he could legitimately ask how badly shopping and night life had been hurt by the riots; certainly they had been affected to some extent. Similarly, a *Times* travel article on Haiti spoke of "an optimistic spirit" among the Haitian people, who "give the impression that even though they lack the material abundance of some parts of the world, they share the pride that comes with independence." Not only is this description directly contradicted by articles on Haiti in the *Times'* regular news columns, but the travel story also fails to point out that dollars spent by visitors to Haiti go into the pocket of dictator Francois Duvalier, who desperately needs hard currency to prop up his repressive regime.

To the *Times'* credit, however, one of the worst abuses in its travel section has been eliminated. Until this year the paper consistently ran at least one puff on Florida right next to the Florida hotel ads. The Florida articles were moved to the back of the section after Robert Stock, formerly a deskman for the *Times Magazine*, became travel editor January 1, replacing Paul J. C. Friedlander, who

now writes a weekly column. At this writing, it is too early to tell whether there will be further improvements, and Stock is reluctant to discuss specific plans, but there is one hopeful sign: the *Times* travel section of March 1 led with a significant and well reported story on discrimination by foreign countries against young, long-haired American tourists.

The way newspapers handle travel writing assignments provides part of the explanation for what finally appears in print. In some newsrooms editors accept for themselves the most appealing free trips and distribute the rest of the invitations among favored reporters. Other papers use the position of travel editor as a reward to a staff member who in addition takes on less glamorous duties. The travel editor of one Philadelphia paper, for example, is also in charge of comics, maps, puzzles, stamps, gardens, schools, and the bridge column.

Most newspapers insist that their travel writers work out as many free deals as possible, and a surprising number won't reimburse them for extra expenses. John McLeod, travel editor of the *Washington Daily News*, wrote in the Scripps-Howard house organ:

The main problem of a travel writer is staying solvent. Any trip away from home costs money. You may be the guest of an airline; hotels may compliment some of your bill; your sightseeing may be provided; you'll be exposed to a lot of banquets and booze. Still it costs money. There are tips and taxis and airport taxes. There are a lot of dull, lonely evenings when you have to provide your own entertainment.

How do we do it? One travel editor buys stamps as he travels for a hometown dealer. Another writes a confidential hotel report for travel agents. Another collects antiques. Another scouts for novelties for a mail order firm. Still others write books and magazine articles or have a radio or television show on the side.

Airlines, hotels, and foreign governments anxious for favorable publicity arrange for lavish excursions. Of course, they carefully read what appears in print, and blacklisting of an overly critical writer is not unknown. "We want travel writers to be honest," the publicity agent for a Caribbean island puts it. "But we hope that 80 per cent of what they write is affirmative." One way airlines sometimes have arranged for a free trip is illegal,

in the opinion of the Civil Aeronautics Board: under a letter of agreement the travel writer buys his plane ticket and the airline agrees to pay him for "reprint rights" to his articles. The two sums are often suspiciously similar: a CAB proceeding against Trans World Airlines charges that Richard Joseph, who writes *Esquire* magazine features as well as a widely syndicated newspaper column, was paid \$675 for reprint rights in connection with a \$676.60 plane trip; and that Wade B. Franklin of the Chicago *Sun-Times* received \$1,500 in connection with a trip worth \$1,577.10. Franklin says TWA flew him and his wife from Bombay to Chicago, with part of the trip first class.

Richard Joseph denies vigorously that he plugs the airlines in return for a free trip; he says that he even pays for some of his excursions himself. Nevertheless his columns show that he is favorably impressed with a number of the world's airlines. On a trip to Venezuela, he noted "Pan Am put together a really perfect flight"; on a flight to South Africa, Alitalia provided "some of the most attentive service I've ever enjoyed aboard an airplane"; Kenya "is still very much BOAC country." Joseph also appreciates his hotels: in a column from Nairobi, he wrote that "I've heard good things about the Inter-Continental, and I can say only good things about the Hilton." Joseph started his African trip this year in South Africa, and large excerpts from his column datelined Johannesburg were reprinted by the South African government in a news release. "If this is darkest Africa," Mr. Joseph wrote, "then somebody must have put on the lights." Naturally, the column never mentioned apartheid.

The travel writers also supplement their free newspaper trips with bargain excursions sponsored by their organization, the Society of American Travel Writers. Three of every four SATW annual meetings are held outside the United States, with charter jet air fare virtually the only cost to members for a week's trip to, say, Turkey (1967) or Vienna (1968). This year the society will hold its convention in Finland; a one-week trip, including plane, meals, hotel, and sightseeing, will cost a member just \$250 for what an SATW officer describes as "very exceptional VIP treatment." Sometimes not even a token amount is paid; the so-

ciety's Middle Atlantic chapter this year accepted an all-expenses-paid invitation from the government of Costa Rica to visit that country.

It is, then, hardly surprising that the most consistently probing travel articles come from a writer whose paper pays every cent of his expenses—Jerry Hulse of the Los Angeles *Times*. Hulse once described Atlantic City, N. J., as "the Skid Row Riviera." He added:

The nicest thing about visiting Atlantic City is the drive out of town. Visiting Atlantic City is like taking your vacation in military boot camp.

In another instance Hulse, after paying his own way to Hawaii for the dedication of a new Hilton hotel, devoted his column to a tongue-in-cheek commentary on the four-day party Conrad Hilton sponsored for reporters and for "200 elite from Bel Air and Beverly Hills." His only comment on the hotel, in fact, was contained in a single paragraph:

There is a certain sameness to all Hilton openings, of course. Good plumbing and dry martinis.

Not only does paying his own way give a travel writer liberty to criticize, but it also frees him from the confinements imposed by his hosts. Generally when travel writers take junkets to foreign countries the local tourist organization plans every minute of their time to make sure they see only the "approved" sights. Georgia Hesse of the San Francisco *Examiner*—who is unusual among travel writers for her fluency in several languages and for her interest in the customs and culture of countries she visits—describes what happened when she went to India as a guest of the Indian government: "I spent a month in India and it was three weeks before I was able to walk down the street myself. They do have some really serious problems, so they suspect travel writers wouldn't be happy visiting the areas where people live."

"How can you criticize an airline or a hotel if you've just had a \$2,500 free airplane ride and free room and meals?" asks Hulse. "It's time the travel writing profession grew up a little bit. We deserve the same right to criticize that a stage or movie critic has. You don't read many travel stories that are critical—most of the time the sky is blue, the sand white, and the palm trees green."

## Notes on the art

### The Washington press at play

■ When it was all over, a number of men had tears in their eyes, even more had lifted hearts and spirits, but a few were so dispirited that they went upstairs to get drunk. We had just heard the President and Vice President of the United States in a unique piano duet—and to many old Gridiron Dinner veterans, it was a moving show-stopper. To a few others, it was a depressing display of gross insensitivity and both conscious and unconscious racism—further proof that they and their hopes for their country are becoming more and more isolated from those places where America's heart and power seem to be moving.

The annual dinner of the Gridiron Club is the time when men can put on white ties and tails and forget the anxiety and loneliness that are central to the human condition and look at other men in white ties and tails and know that they have arrived or are still there. The guests are generally grateful and gracious. But the event's importance is beyond the structures of graciousness because it shows the most powerful elements of the nation's daily press and all elements of the nation's government locked in a symbiotic embrace. The rich and the powerful in jest tell many truths about themselves and about their country. I don't feel very gracious about what they told me.

Some weeks ago, to my surprise and delight, a friend—a sensitive man of honor—with a little half-apology about the required costume, had invited me to attend the dinner. The first impression was stun-

ning: almost every passing face was a familiar one. Some had names that were household words. Some merely made up a montage of the familiar faces and bearings of our times. There were Richard Helms and Walter Mondale and Henry Kissinger and George McGovern and Joel Broyhill and Tom Wicker and William Westmoreland and John Mitchell and Tom Clark (ironically placed, by some pixie no doubt, next to each other on the dais) and Robert Finch and Ralph Nader, and, of course, the President of the United States.

One thing quickly became clear about those faces. Apart from Walter Washington—who, I suppose, as Mayor had to be invited—mine was the only face in a crowd of some 500 that was not white. There were no Indians, there were no Asians, there were no Puerto Ricans, there were no Mexican-Americans. There were just the Mayor and me. Incredibly, I sensed that there were few in that room who thought that anything was missing.

There is something about an atmosphere like that that is hard to define, but excruciatingly easy for a black man to feel. It is the heavy, almost tangible, clearly visible, broad assumption that in places where it counts America is a white country. I was an American citizen sitting in a banquet room in a hotel which I had visited many times. (My last occasion for a visit to that hotel was the farewell party for the white staff director and the black deputy staff director of the United States Commission on Civil Rights.) This night in that room, less than three miles from my home in the nation's capital—a 60 per cent black city—I felt out of place in America.

That is not to say that there were not kind men, good men, warm men in and around and about the party, nor is it to say that anyone was personally rude to me. There were some old friends and some new acquaintances whom I was genuinely glad to see. Ed Muskie, who

had given a very funny and exquisitely partisan speech (the Republicans have three problems: the war, inflation, and what to say on Lincoln's Birthday), was one of these. I was even warmly embraced by the Deputy Attorney General, Mr. Kleindienst, and had a long conversation with the associate director of the FBI, Mr. DeLoach.

But it was not the people so much who shaped the evening. It was the humor amidst that pervasive whiteness about what was going on in this country these days that gave the evening its form and substance. There were many jokes about the "Southern strategy." White people have funny senses of humor. Some of them found something to laugh about in the Southern strategy. Black people don't think it's funny at all. That strategy hits men where they live—in their hopes for themselves and their dreams for their children. We find it sinister and frightening. And let it not be said that the Gridiron Club and its guests are not discriminating about their humor. There was a real sensibility about the inappropriateness of poking fun that night about an ailing former President, but none about laughing about policies which crush the aspirations of millions of citizens of this nation. An instructive distinction, I thought.

There was a joke about the amendments to the Constitution (so what if we rescind the First Amendment, there'll still be twenty-five left), and about repression (you stop bugging me, I'll stop bugging you), and there were warm, almost admiring jokes about the lady who despises "liberal Communists" and thinks something like the Russian Revolution occurred in Washington on November 15. There was applause—explosive and prolonged—for Judges Clement Haynsworth and Julius Hoffman (the largest hands of the evening by my reckoning).

As I looked, listened, and saw the faces of these judges and of the gen-



erals and of the admirals and of the old members of the oligarchies of the House and Senate, I thought of the soft, almost beatific smile of Cesar Chavez; the serious troubled face of Vine Deloria, Jr., and the handsome, sensitive faces of Andy Young and Julian Bond of Georgia. All those men and more have fought with surely as much idealism as any general ever carried with him to Saigon, with as much courage as any senator ever took with him on a fact-finding trip to a Vietnam battlefield, or even as much hope, spirit, and belief in the American dream as any Peace Corps kid ever took to the Andes in Peru. But the men I have named fought for American freedom on American soil. And they were not there. But Julius Hoffman was.

As the jokes about the "Southern strategy" continued, I thought about the one-room segregated schoolhouse where I began my education in Kansas City. That was my neighborhood school. When they closed it, I was bused—without an apparent second thought—as a five-year-old kindergartner, across town to the black elementary school. It was called Crispus Attucks.

And I thought of the day I took my daughter when she was seven along the Freedom Trail, in Boston, and of telling her about the black man named Crispus Attucks who was the first American to die in our revolution. And I remember telling her that white America would try very hard in thousands of conscious and unconscious ways both to make her feel that her people had had no part in building America's greatness and to make her feel inferior. And I remember the profoundly moving and grateful look in her eyes and the wordless hug she gave me when I told her, "Don't you believe them because they are lies." And I felt white America in that room in the Statler Hilton telling me all those things that night, and I told myself, "Don't you believe them because they are lies."

And when it came to the end, the President and the Vice President of the United States, in an act which they had consciously worked up, put on a Mr. Bones routine about the Southern strategy, with the biggest boffo coming as the Vice President affected a deep Southern accent. And then they played their duets—the President playing his songs, the Vice President playing *Dixie*, the whole thing climaxed by *God Bless America* and *Auld Lang Syne*. The crowd ate it up. They roared. As they roared, I thought that after our black decade of imploring, suing, marching, lobbying, singing, rebelling, praying and dying we had come to this: a Vice Presidential *Dixie* with the President as his straight man. In the serious and frivolous places of power—at the end of that decade—America was still virtually lily white. And most of the people in that room were reveling in it. What, I wondered, would it take for them to understand that men also come in colors other than white. Seeing and feeling their blindness, I shuddered at the answers that came most readily to mind.

As we stood voluntarily, some more slowly than others, when the two men began to play *God Bless America*, I couldn't help remembering Judy Collins (who could not sing in Chicago) singing *Where Have All the Flowers Gone?* So, later, I found Nick Kotz, author of *Let Them Eat Promises*, and we drank down our dreams.

I don't believe that I have been blanketed in and suffocated by such racism and insensitivity since I was a sophomore in college, when I was the only black invited to a minstrel spoof put on at a white fraternity house. But then, they were only fraternity brothers, weren't they?

ROGER WILKINS

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## On being expelled from Moscow

■ My arrival in Moscow in early May, 1967, could not have been under more cheerful circumstances. The weather was fine. Soviet officials at the Foreign Ministry seemed delighted to see me: the *Toronto Telegram's* Moscow bureau is part of a *quid pro quo* agreement which had led to establishment of *Pravda's* bureau in Ottawa, and the arrangement could have been endangered when my predecessor, Peter Worthington, was asked to leave and also was denied a re-entry visa. The fact that I was a U. S. citizen working for a Canadian paper passed without comment.

May and the first part of June were delightful. I was wined by the Novosti Press Agency, a sort of USIA operation which is a key part of the KGB secret police apparatus. I was taken on press tours staged by the Foreign Ministry to the Caucasus and the Baltic. Two of my new-found "friends" at Novosti offered me money to write stories for them, and one, noting that I was a bachelor, suggested he could find a girl for me. I rejected both overtures. At the United Nations, my previous post, I had never been the subject of such hospitality.

Unfortunately the honeymoon began to end in mid-June. The economy was beginning to tailspin; the Kosygin-sponsored economic reform program was receiving stiff opposition from party hacks who correctly foresaw that reform would have to be accompanied by political change. The Israeli victory in the Six-Day War caused political rumbles. There were diplomatic reports of a Kremlin power struggle, in part confirmed by Shelepin's removal from the party secretariat and Kosygin's panicky departure for Glassboro (where he could offer President Johnson nothing because

the disunity in the Politburo gave him no leeway for negotiation). I reported all these things; my Russian was passable, and this allowed me to do a great deal of legwork without an interpreter and without my friends at Novosti.

In mid-July I was invited to the Foreign Ministry, where I was lectured by Fidor Simonov, the deputy press director, a typical Soviet bureaucrat in his late fifties—short and grayish in complexion, hair color, and personality. His major complaint was that my reporting was “unfriendly” and not contributing to good relations between Canada and the U.S.S.R. When I asked for examples he cited my reports on the Mideast debacle, the economic decline, and the power struggle. I was reassured when he accused me of “quoting the Soviet press to show the gloomy side of life here.” I had made it a point to intensively read the daily and periodical press in order to document my stories, some of which I held up until I had a suitable quotation. When I pointed out to Simonov that my “gloomy” reports were based on what was happening, he counseled me to relax and enjoy myself rather than get into trouble. He added that it was better not to write anything than to write “this sort of stuff.” When I made no comment, he got very stern, saying that “certain measures would be taken” if I continued reporting in this manner.

The next month, after having been asked to participate in trips outside of Moscow, I was “disinvited.” My requests for interviews and solo trips were turned down. My “friends” at Novosti told me how unhappy they were: they had provided me with information and assistance which I had misused. It was the old story of the news sources trying to get control of the reporter; I was again advised not to rock the boat. At a cocktail party at the end of August I was approached by a half-drunk mem-

ber of the Foreign Ministry press department. This bear of a man jovially mentioned my predecessor's experiences and let drop that I would not get a re-entry visa if I continued my obstreperousness.

My problems caused consternation at the Canadian Embassy, just as they would have at the U. S. Embassy had I been working for an American paper. There also were rumblings from the press corps. One Canadian correspondent advised me to “cool” it, adding, “If you write like this, what will my bosses back home say about my reports?” He was a “Soviet expert” who had devoted a good deal of time to learning the language and studying the country, an investment he had no desire to jeopardize. One of the “deans” of the press corps, the head of a news bureau, called me in to deliver some fatherly advice: that one had to be careful in Moscow and shouldn't exaggerate Soviet problems. He cited difficulties in the West, particularly riots in the U. S., as examples for his thesis that other countries had problems, too. I didn't get the point because I couldn't imagine myself covering a Harlem race riot (as I did in 1964) and downplaying it because things were worse in Russia. I quickly became *persona non grata* to the “dean” and others like him.

A major advantage was that I was not married; I didn't have to worry about taking children out of school in midterm if I was expelled; I didn't have a wife who might feel insecure from the pressure. But my biggest asset no doubt was the full support of the *Telegram*. I reported everything to my publisher, John Bassett, who told me he wasn't interested in having me doctor my copy to please the Russians. This support was vital because a journalist who does not cooperate with the authorities often finds himself in trouble with his home office: expulsion means the expense of bringing a new man to Moscow, possibly including moving costs for a family

and its belongings, while bringing home a man with his family and belongings and finding him a suitable assignment. If a paper suffers an expulsion every year the accountant's office will not like it; it is a powerful blow to the news budget. I have known correspondents who have come to Moscow with the tacit understanding of their bosses that they would not rock the boat.

The Russians exploit the situation by playing off one news organization against another. Those who cooperate get the scoops; those who don't are left in the cold. For instance, when the London *Daily Express* got an interview with Kim Philby as well as first chance at the Philby memoirs, I received a rocket from one of our deskmen. He wanted the same thing the *Express* had. I sent a long memo pointing out that the *Express* works closely with Novosti, and that even the British Communist party paper, the *Morning Star*, once had complained because the bourgeois *Express* and not the *Star* was the outlet for such exclusives as the Philby story. I once was told that I might get a requested interview with President Podgorny if I behaved; I never got it.

Pulling punches in one's reporting is not altogether unpopular with folks back home. There is a tendency to want to hear nice things about the U.S.S.R. But in this way a cumulative ignorance develops that makes it difficult to believe that a country which was first in space also can't make enough toilet paper. Moreover, a relationship of the sort that the London *Express* maintains can make a news organization a virtual organ of the Soviet secret police. The Philby disclosures were designed to get even for the Penkovsky publicity, to discredit British Intelligence, and drive a wedge between the American and British Intelligence operations. A planted story also can have domestic implications for the U.S.S.R.,

as was the case in the winter of 1968-69 when the Victor Louis-Novosti complex was spreading the rumor that Kosygin was out. This was part of an effort of hardliners to oust Kosygin by laying the psychological groundwork for it.

It would be wrong to play down the very real obstacles to doing a good job in Moscow. For instance, though there is no censorship of copy, there is no way of legally getting TV or other film out of the country without KGB permission. There is even a 1947 law which says that a correspondent must have the permission of the Foreign Ministry before talking to a Soviet citizen. (This law was enforced only once to my knowledge, in January, 1968, when I was in Canada.) A correspondent who arouses the ire of the KGB may find himself being expelled for immorality. I know of two cases, one involving a newspaper and the other a newsmagazine, where men had to leave because their relations with Russian girls got sticky. Many streetwalkers in Moscow work for the secret police. Of course, a lecher who plays ball with the KGB can enjoy himself with impunity—and I know some who do.

Why, having defied warnings as I did, did I last a little more than two and a half years—including the period of re-Stalinization, the Czechoslovakian invasion, and deepening economic failures, all of which I reported unflatteringly? (Indeed, I am told I was the only Western correspondent to report such details as the shortage of meat for the November 7 anniversary of the Soviet state—usually a sort of Christmas festival.) In many respects I was lucky. Incidents that were planned never came off because of pure chance or incompetence on the part of the KGB. Then again, my paper told me to stay, and I would not leave quietly as my predecessor had done.

This obstinacy at first confused and perplexed the Russians. Then

in April, 1968, they finally hit me with the re-entry visa maneuver. I was ordered confined to Moscow for the next eight months; I could leave, but not come back. I stayed put. Had I had a wife I couldn't have taken it.

The majority of Soviet correspondents abroad work more or less for the KGB. In Canada, it is "more"; the *Pravda* man does very little reporting but has other duties which previously were performed by the *Izvestia* man before the *Izvestia* man was expelled for spying. Thus when the *Telegram* mobilized the support of the Canadian government, and the *Pravda* man in Ottawa also had his travel opportunities restricted, I was helped somewhat. Faced with restrictions on their man, the Soviets allowed me to travel within the country. In fact, I soon became travel-weary—I made sixteen trips outside of Moscow, most in my last eleven months there. I went across Siberia twice, to Central Asia, and visited ten of the fifteen Soviet Socialist Republics. I owe it all to *Pravda*.

Another thing in my favor perhaps was that Toronto is not a major world news center. This meant that the Russians probably were more patient with me than with someone like Anatol Shub of the *Washington Post*, who was expelled last May. Shub, incidentally, was one of the few Western correspondents who in my personal opinion did a good job during my tenure in Moscow. The fact that the *Telegram* is a Canadian and not an American paper also may have contributed to the situation, though Canadian news organizations are expected to remain "in bounds" just like their American brethren.

In any event, I managed to "last" until last November 13. My replacement, Marq DeVilliers, already had been chosen and was due to arrive in Leningrad on November 12. About noon November 10, I received a call to be at the

Foreign Ministry at 3. Mr. Simonov was there, and he began by saying that I had been warned but that I had continued to write "disparaging" articles. I interrupted him and asked how much time I had. He said two or three days. We settled on three days, or seventy-two hours. I stood up and shook hands with him and left. I was astounded, but more so by the timing of the expulsion than by the expulsion itself. There was no real dislocation of the *Telegram's* coverage there; this appeared to be merely a face-saving retaliation and a warning to other correspondents.

Apparently it was expected that I would leave quietly. Although the expulsion was given at 3 p.m., Moscow time, there was no Soviet announcement. If they expected me not to report it, as has happened in the past with others, they were wrong. I filed a rather lengthy report to the *Telegram*, which played the story across the top of the front page. It wasn't until 9 p.m., Moscow time, that Tass caught up. With bells ringing, Tass moved a story saying "it has been learned" that I had been expelled for "systematic violation of norms of conduct of foreign correspondents in the Soviet Union and for activity that is incompatible with journalism." I am grateful to the *New York Times* for noting on November 11 that "such accusations have been leveled in the past against newsmen who rely on other than official sources for their dispatches."

Because of the nature of the Soviet state, I don't have any sure solutions to problems of Moscow coverage, but there are some antidotes. One certainly would be to label all TV news coverage as censored—which, in effect, it is. One network has tried to skirt the problem of censored TV film by saying that its shows have been done "in cooperation" with Novosti. That is not enough. "In cooperation" at best is self-censorship and at worst means that the programs are staged

by your friendly KGB men at Novosti. Another solution, for the U. S., at least, might be to pool Moscow offices of the three major TV networks. This would prevent the playing off of one network against the other. Whereas it can be argued that there is no real justification for the American TV networks' having separate offices in Moscow, however, this argument cannot be used for radio services. Soviet authorities do not censor radio reports, and in fact there is a certain leniency in this area, probably due to the difficulty of monitoring voice reports.

Since Nikita Khrushchev removed formal censorship the print media can no longer grace their Moscow reports with a logotype saying "censored." And I doubt that any papers would wish to stigmatize a Moscow story by saying, "This report is not quite as honest as other reports in the paper." Consequently, the only alternative is honesty, and this means expulsions. Newspapers, newsmagazines, and news agencies must be willing to bear the financial expense of expulsions in order to tell the truth. And I personally feel that there were more candid reporting from Moscow expulsions would not be as numerous as some might imagine.

It was encouraging that the Nixon Administration evicted a Soviet correspondent when Shub was expelled. If Moscow expulsions are met with expulsions of Soviet correspondents, the KGB apparatus will be hurt. There is also a humorous side to expelling a Soviet correspondent. Unlike the Western newsman, the Soviet correspondent returns home to a much lower standard of living. Legitimate Soviet correspondents as well as KGB agents can be expected to lobby against too hasty expulsions if their pleasant assignments are at stake. Also, Western news organizations should renounce the expedient practice of self-expulsion when Soviets don't like a correspondent;

self-expulsion can bring no retaliation from Western governments.

What is at stake here is not political. It is a question of professional behavior.

AARON R. EINFRAK

Mr. Einfrank, the *Toronto Telegram's* Moscow correspondent until last November, now heads that newspaper's Washington bureau.

## The cyclamate story

■ When the cyclamate storm broke over official Washington last fall it was easy to assume that TV newsman Paul Friedman, who got credit for a major scoop on the dangers of the artificial sweeteners, had either exclusive access to classified information or a coveted "highly placed source" in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. But according to Friedman, who is assigned to WRC-TV, the NBC owned-and-operated station in Washington, any properly trained reporter with ample time and curiosity could have had the story. In fact, Long Island's afternoon *Newsday* broke its own report the day after Friedman's initial story on WRC-TV and the same day Huntley-Brinkley gave Friedman's work national exposure.

Friedman's original research into cyclamates began after a friend had declined a diet soft drink in Friedman's kitchen because he had heard that "too many cyclamates could be unhealthy." Friedman, who had just been named head of the WRC investigative team known as the Probe Unit, began reading about cyclamates—which HEW estimated were in food products in 75 per cent of American homes and which were the mainstay of a billion-dollar-a-year diet soft drink industry. Irwin Margolis, then WRC-TV

news director and now general news manager for all NBC-TV owned-and-operated stations, had seen to it that the Probe Unit—the first of its kind for NBC—would be free to develop stories fully without the press of regular deadlines.

Friedman's three-week investigation took him to Dr. Marvin Legator, a U. S. Food and Drug Administration scientist who had reported that large doses of cyclamate products caused chromosome breaks—genetic damage—in rats. The reporter then sought an interview with Dr. Jacqueline Verrett, an FDA biochemist involved in cyclamate research, and at the same time requested an interview with Dr. Herbert Ley, then FDA Commissioner. Thus was started a series of events that reached a climax on Oct. 18 when HEW Secretary Robert H. Finch issued orders, later modified, for the scheduled removal of all cyclamate products from supermarket shelves. The chronology:

SEPT. 29—Friedman, by telephone, arranged an interview with Dr. Verrett for the next day. He had only a partial idea of what she would tell him, and she did not realize that he planned to bring a camera crew. Friedman was told, as he had been for several days, that Dr. Ley was unavailable. According to Friedman, "It was clear they were trying to put me off."

SEPT. 30—Dr. Verrett notified appropriate FDA officials and public relations specialists that an NBC reporter was coming to interview her that afternoon. She did not ask for permission to give the interview, nor did anyone ask her not to give it. Friedman filmed his interview that afternoon in the presence of several FDA officials, including public relations men. She showed and described chick embryos that had been grossly deformed by cyclamate injections and contrasted them with properly developed embryos. Both Friedman and Dr. Verrett emphasized that there was no evidence cyclamates would have similar ef-



fects on human embryos, but she did advise pregnant women to avoid cyclamates except when taken under a doctor's supervision.

OCT. 1—Friedman spent the day preparing his story for the 7 p.m. local news. His editor, Robert McFarland, recognizing the story's value, told Friedman he could do an eight-minute report. Meanwhile, Drs. Ley and Verrett met with Charles C. Johnson, administrator of HEW's Consumer Protection and Environmental Health Service, to discuss Dr. Verrett's research. The meeting, which grew directly from Friedman's interview with Dr. Verrett the previous day, was to gather information for presentation to Finch. It also provided Dr. Ley with his first complete understanding of Dr. Verrett's work. Ten months earlier, through channels, Dr. Verrett had sent the Commissioner a memo on her cyclamate research, but the memo had never reached Dr. Ley's desk.

That afternoon Dr. Verrett also granted an interview to Frances Cerra, a consumer specialist for *Newsday*, and again said she would advise pregnant women to avoid cyclamates. Miss Cerra said later she had begun looking into cyclamates because of a vague comment by a friend and had been referred to Dr. Verrett by Dr. Legator—circumstances paralleling those that brought Friedman to the story.

Friedman was informed by phone that Dr. Ley finally was available for Friedman's long-sought interview. Citing the lateness of the hour, Friedman said he could not incorporate film with Dr. Ley into that evening's news show, and he arranged an interview for the following morning.

Friedman told Harry Griggs, the Huntley-Brinkley Washington producer, that he thought his story was worthy of immediate network coverage. Griggs said he would watch it on the local news. Friedman's eight-minute story ran that evening, with one and a half min-

utes devoted to Dr. Verrett's graphic description, on camera, of the deformed embryos.

OCT. 2—In admitted response to Friedman's report, Dr. Ley announced that he was asking the National Academy of Sciences to conduct a comprehensive thirty-day review of the cyclamate question. During his previously arranged interview with Friedman, Dr. Ley admitted that until the previous day's meeting with Dr. Verrett he had not had a complete understanding of the cyclamate research being conducted by Drs. Verrett and Legator. Producer Griggs told Friedman the network definitely was interested in the story for the Huntley-Brinkley show that evening. After a suggestion was made and vetoed that a regular network correspondent be given the assignment, Friedman was assigned to the network spot. He was instructed to condense his earlier story, including the interview with Dr. Verrett; to delete most of the film of the deformed chick embryos; to eliminate entirely Dr. Verrett's dramatic explanation of her research; and to incorporate portions of the Ley interview. The story, consuming slightly less than two and a half minutes, went on the Huntley-Brinkley show that evening, keyed to Dr. Ley's announcement of the cyclamate review rather than to Friedman's investigative work which had prompted it.

*Newsday* ran Frances Cerra's story based on her interview with Dr. Verrett. But as Miss Cerra later acknowledged, "If the network hadn't run the story, we would not have had a major impact."

OCT. 3—The wire services and most major newspapers carried stories on Dr. Ley's order for a review of cyclamate safety and on Dr. Verrett's research. Few reports gave credit to Friedman, Huntley-Brinkley, WRC-TV, or NBC. Some alluded to an unidentified televised report of Dr. Verrett's research as having prompted Dr. Ley's interest in cyclamates.

OCT. 7—Secretary Finch sharply criticized the FDA for "waffling" on cyclamate safety and said that the Administration could expect "substantial reorganization of procedures and personnel." He also criticized Dr. Verrett, without mentioning her name, for going "too far" in her interview with Friedman.

OCT. 8—Abbott Laboratories, the largest producer of cyclamates, began a seminar on non-nutritive sweeteners, and company officials attempted to discredit challenges to the safety of cyclamates. This same day Abbott received word from an independent research laboratory, testing cyclamates under an Abbott contract, that bladder cancer had developed in rats given large doses of cyclamates.

OCT. 10—Abbott scientists confirmed the findings of the independent laboratory.

OCT. 13—Abbott, after a delay because of the weekend, notified the FDA of evidence of bladder cancer.

OCT. 16—Specialists from the Cancer Institute, acting on a request of the FDA, reaffirmed the diagnosis of bladder cancer in the experimental rats. An ad hoc committee of the National Academy of Sciences met in Washington for the cyclamate review requested Oct. 2 by Dr. Ley.

OCT. 17—The NAS committee recommended that cyclamates be removed from the FDA list of food additives recognized as safe.

OCT. 18—Finch, at a press conference with Dr. Ley and other HEW officials, announced he was ordering a ban on products using cyclamates. The ban was based on the controversial Delaney amendment to the Food and Drug Act, requiring that any food additive known to cause cancer in an animal be removed from the marketplace. Finch and the other HEW officials cited the incidence of bladder cancer in rats being tested by the independent laboratory. They insisted that Dr. Verrett's research was not the basis for the ban.

Nov. 20—Finch approved the use of cyclamates in food products, although he maintained the ban on cyclamates in diet soft drinks. He skirted the Delaney amendment by reclassifying cyclamates as non-prescription drugs.

DEC. 10—In a major overhaul of FDA administration, Dr. Ley was ousted as commissioner, carrying out an Oct. 7 promise by Finch of a "substantial reorganization of procedures and personnel" at FDA. Dr. Ley, a Johnson appointee, might have been removed anyway, but it was clear that the cyclamate episode had sorely embarrassed Finch.

Despite Finch's criticism of Dr. Verrett, it must be noted that she did notify supervisors that she was granting Friedman an interview, that FDA officials were present during the interview, and that she could fairly have assumed that Dr. Ley knew what she would tell Friedman since she had sent the Commissioner a memo on the subject. Ralph Nader, who has created a special task force on the FDA, thinks that Dr. Verrett acted not only responsibly but with admirable daring. He says that of all media only TV could have had so great an impact because someone in a bureaucracy more easily can speak than write about a controversial subject, and because of the size of a network audience—estimated at 20 million for Huntley-Brinkley. He believes that the episode demonstrates what can be accomplished repeatedly on consumer stories if TV will commit more people, time, and money.

Indeed, from the news media standpoint perhaps the most important aspect of the whole episode is the evidence it offers of a vast, largely untapped potential for significant investigative reporting by television. Network executives cite personnel shortages and high costs as impediments to investigative reporting. But since the recognized success of WRC's Probe Unit, Mar-

golis is moving to establish similar operations at all NBC owned-and-operated stations. This could be a breakthrough. For, as Walter Cronkite has said of the TV industry, "We have barely dipped our toe into investigative reporting." If there was any doubt, the cyclamate case demonstrates that if the public

demands it and the networks respond, TV can be the muckrakers' medium in the last third of the twentieth century.

HOWARD G. PASTER

Howard G. Paster is special assistant to U.S. Rep. Lester Wolff of New York.

### Covering the Chief Justice

THE SCENE: Regency Hyatt House, Atlanta.

THE DATE: February 21.

THE OCCASION: An American Bar Association banquet at which Chief Justice Warren Burger is to speak. More than 200 persons are to attend. Press coverage has been invited.

THE TIME: A few minutes before the dinner. (CBS-TV newsman Phil Jones is conversing with an unidentified ABA official. The dialogue, as transcribed by CBS:)

OFFICIAL: All right, Mr. Jones. May I ask how you happen to be here?

JONES: I am in the Southern bureau of CBS News. . . . When the Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court makes a speech in Atlanta to a gathering of the American Bar Association, it is legitimately news. . . .

OFFICIAL: This I understand. But I'm sure that you and CBS would wish to honor a request by the Chief Justice that the television cameras not be present at his speech, wouldn't you? Or would CBS not be interested in honoring his wish?

JONES: We would be interested in covering the news for the American public.

(The Official says Jones is evading the question, but Jones insists the speech is "public.")

OFFICIAL: This is a public speech. Whether or not television is to be in the room with the lights and the cameras and so forth is a matter about which the Chief Justice might be expected to express an opinion. Isn't that correct?

(There is a further exchange, then Jones suggests perhaps the Chief Justice should be consulted; the official agrees and escorts Jones to him.)

JONES: How do you do . . .

BURGER: (Several words unintelligible) Now this is — this is a non-text speech. (More words unintelligible.)

JONES: I am here as a newsman.

BURGER: Well, then, goodnight.

JONES: Well, I'm asking why we cannot cover . . . speeches.

BURGER: Come to my office . . . come to my office sometime, and when you've got an hour or two . . . I'll be glad to discuss it with you.

JONES: You don't consider this a public speech tonight?

BURGER: I don't care to discuss the subject with you.

JONES: Well, we are charged with covering the news. . . .

UNIDENTIFIED THIRD VOICE: You want me to call somebody to remove him?

JONES: And, and I've been . . . (Intervening mix of voices drowns out words.)

BURGER: Mr. Jones, I would suggest that it might be better if you didn't pursue the matter any further. If there's something that conflicts with your instructions, why don't you call your superiors? That I suggested it?

JONES: I will leave—if you'll just tell me why—why we can't cover it—then I'll leave.

(Voices of Jones and Burger overlap.)

BURGER: Really, you didn't make any advance arrangement, that's why. You didn't undertake to make them.

JONES: With whom? With you?

BURGER: With me. That's the only person you can make arrangements with when I have a speech.

JONES: In the future, if we make arrangements with you, will we be able to cover speeches?

BURGER: If I agree. Yes, if I agree—of course.

(Voices overlap and trail off, indicating that Burger is walking away.)

## Books

ANNENBERG. By Gaeton Fonzi. Weybright and Talley. \$7.95.

□ Some three years ago Gaeton Fonzi, a bright young newspaperman who had gone to work for the bright young magazine *Philadelphia*, was probing into a ring of local racketeers who were making millions of dollars from a series of fraudulent business bankruptcies. He stumbled repeatedly on the name of Harry Karafin, star investigative reporter for the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. Ultimately he and his colleagues published an article proving that Karafin had been engaged in wholesale blackmail, shaking down shoddy characters and even corporations and banks for lush payments to keep certain stories out of the *Inquirer*. Karafin subsequently was convicted on some forty counts.

Thereupon Fonzi started investigating the publisher in whose employ such a blackmailer could operate—and why even the respectable victims apparently felt it would have been useless to take the case to that publisher. Out of this came a series of articles in *Philadelphia* that have now been expanded into this 240-page book. The net result indicates no complicity on the part of Walter Annenberg, the publisher and now Ambassador to the Court of St. James. Nor does it implicate Annenberg in any kind of illegal action. It does, however, document in shabby detail after shabby detail what every professional observer of the *Inquirer* has long sensed: that he grossly abused his position as publisher by using the paper's news columns to "get" citizens who offended him; suppressed news that was not to his liking; and created lists of "good guys" and "bad guys" who should be treated accordingly in the news columns of his newspaper. There were even those, including the president of the University of Pennsylvania, whose names were not to be mentioned in the *Inquirer*—a practice that led to absurd circumlocutions.

This reviewer naturally cannot vouch for all of the factual statements in the book, but notes that the most shocking of them have appeared in magazine articles and have not been successfully challenged. If only half of those statements were true

the book would still add up to a portrait of an exceedingly wealthy and powerful individual who ignored the principles of honest journalism, abused a public trust, and contributed substantially to widespread public distrust of all of journalism. The conclusion is inescapable that Walter Annenberg's main affirmative contribution to American journalism has been the selling of his two Philadelphia papers, effective January 1, to the John S. Knight chain, which has both a sense of responsibility and an appreciation of ethics.

Saying these things in this language brings no pleasure to this reviewer—not because he fears retaliation but because he has known Walter Annenberg, chatted with him at dinners, and found him socially gracious. To say less, however, would be dishonest and a disservice to decent journalism. It would amount to joining in the unconscious conspiracy of American newspaper publishers who pal with one another at conventions and politely refrain from criticizing even the least admirable colleagues who undermine confidence in journalism.

The picture one gets from the book will surprise no professional who has followed Philadelphia journalism. It even elicits a touch of compassion for Walter Annenberg. Here was a young man who inherited great wealth but also substantial handicaps. His father had fought the brutal Chicago circulation wars, had later made a fortune servicing bookie joints, and had ended up in prison on charges of income tax evasion. The son expanded the empire, acquired broadcast stations, started the fabulously successful *TV Guide*, indulged in philanthropies running into tens of millions, struggled for social acceptance, and—obsessed with clearing the family name—saw the newspapers as his best means of achieving "respectability." Excerpts on page 56 tell the story in more detail.

One is left with the feeling that perhaps Walter Annenberg never really understood the mission, the obligations, or the ethical principles of decent journalism. Certainly he looks upon himself as a widely misunderstood man. Yet, one deduces, he felt that he had "made it" when President Nixon appointed him Ambassador to England and that he no longer needed the Philadelphia newspapers

to give him status. It all raises serious questions about the kind of happenstance that dictates whether the citizens of a given town have honest or dishonest news media.

EDWARD W. BARRETT

□ Walter Annenberg called himself the "editor" as well as publisher of the Philadelphia *Inquirer*. But he did very little editing. What he did do was undermine the legitimate handling of the news. In no way was this more apparent than in his refusal to permit the names of certain individuals to be printed in his newspaper, regardless of their inextricable association with any news event. Those who have made this blacklist—known uneuphemistically in the *Inquirer's* city room as "Annenberg's shit list"—have inevitably done or said something to offend the publisher's sensibilities.

Ever changing, the blacklist was not something that was officially posted in the *Inquirer* newsroom. Word was simply sent from the twelfth floor to the city desk, usually via the assistant to the publisher, E. Z. Dimitman, and thence down through the staff. Reporters, however, were usually never told specifically until they happened to write a story in which the blacklisted individual was involved. Former *Inquirer* columnist Rose DeWolf, for instance, once wrote a piece about the operations of the Philadelphia-Baltimore Stock Exchange, extensively quoting its president, Elkins Wetherill. When she turned it in she was told that Wetherill was on the blacklist and his name couldn't be used in the newspaper. She had to call Wetherill and ask his permission to attribute his quotes to an Exchange vice-president. . . .

In many cases only Annenberg himself knew the reason for the editorial ostracism. It would be difficult to guess, for instance, what such entertainers as Imogene Coca, Zsa Zsa Gabor, or Dinah Shore did to arouse Annenberg's ire. (His decree against Miss Shore even extended to *TV Guide*, which, at the time when her television program was near the top of the ratings, simply listed it as "Variety Show," omitting the name of its star.)

Another instance in which Annenberg's motivations were obscure involved Philadelphia's professional basketball team, the 76ers. Both the *Inquirer* and the *Daily News* were ordered to extensively curtail their coverage of the team, drop all features about its players, and not print any pregame information. Game coverage was confined to a simple formula: the 76ers got two paragraphs the day after the game if the team won, one paragraph if it lost. . . .

One staffer recalls a particularly trying time when University of Pennsylvania president Gaylord P. Harnwell was on the list. The *Inquirer* had been going through some fancy footwork to avoid mentioning his name in its news columns. The recipient of the prestigious Wharton School Alumni gold medal received it not from Harnwell but from an anonymous "university official". . . .

—Annenberg: *A Biography of Power*, Gaeton Fonzi

MASS MEDIA IN THE SOVIET UNION. By Mark W. Hopkins. Pegasus. \$8.95.

□ To most Americans, Soviet journalism is so grossly propagandist that it scarcely deserves attention. Mark W. Hopkins demurs. Soviet mass media, he suggests, should be appraised in the light of what the Soviet system expects of them. Thus understood they offer windows—somewhat murky windows, to be sure—on Soviet life. More, they offer contrasts and comparisons with their American counterparts that are often instructive. For people in journalism, the result is the publishing surprise of the season, a fact-packed, notably fair-minded study presented by a scholar who can write.

The paradox of the Soviet system lies in its insistence that the government and the people are one. Accordingly, the press is "the voice of the people," and editors pride themselves in securing redress for readers who complain of bureaucratic inefficiencies (usually low-level ones), often by printing their letters and demanding action. The leadership encourages this as a means of policing the bureaucracy, and while the press is not always successful in getting action, these efforts indicate that journalism has considerably more standing within the Soviet system than Khrushchev's famous conveyor-belt image implied. *Pravda* and *Izvestia* together receive nearly a million letters a year—not all of them, of course, complaints. Yet this same people's press offers "virtually no facts or analysis . . . how major decisions are arrived at in the Soviet political hierarchy," no criticism of leadership, and no news that might offend that leadership. The resulting credibility gap, Hopkins thinks, shows up obliquely in some of the rather primitive audience research now emerging from Soviet universities. Readers and listeners and viewers would like more foreign news and less heavy helpings of economic and political matter.

Soviet journalists, Hopkins points out, have a place in the system that precludes their exhibiting the sometimes startling independence of novelists and other writers. He expects only the most gradual and tentative relaxation of censorship so long as the media remain subsidiaries of the Soviet corporate society. Even this modest hope rests on his premise that, thanks partly to Khrushchev, the



media in the 1960s showed signs of emerging as a quasi-independent force within the hierarchy. Unfortunately the author completed his voluminous research before the Czechoslovakian disaster, the impact of which cannot have been helpful.

Gleanings:

—Most Soviet journalists write in longhand, turning in their copy to typists.

—The Soviet press still deals with sex with Victorian shyness, equating it with romantic love of the old Hollywood B-movie variety.

—The immense circulations of *Pravda* and *Izvestia* are maintained by Soyuzpachat, a Ministry of Communications agency that distributes all newspapers and magazines and conducts annual circulation campaigns for them. Tie-in sales are used to help fill the quotas of politically important papers. (You want *Playboy*? Subscribe to the *Monitor* and we'll give you both.) Newspaper circulation doubled from 1956 to 1966, while magazine circulation quadrupled.

—Soviet television is widely criticized for lackluster news programs. Quiz shows are far more popular. News gets about 17 per cent of programming time. The Soviet bureaucracy, more comfortable with print media, until recently has been slow and unimaginative in exploiting radio and TV. Both media were long handicapped by problems of transmission over vast distances.

—Immediacy is considerably less urgent in Soviet journalism than in the West. Of 1,135 magazines, only eight are weeklies. On major stories, government radio still defers to the two big national papers, waiting until they are in print. Headlines have a quaint 1880s flavor, e.g., NEW GREEK GOVERNMENT, CATASTROPHE IN THE ATLANTIC, EVENTS IN GABON. Shorter items often appear under a standing head reminiscent of pre-Civil War American journalism (THE LATEST BY MAGNETIC TELEGRAPH), the Soviet version being TASS TRANSMITS THE LATEST NEWS.

Hopkins, Milwaukee *Journal* Soviet specialist, studied in Leningrad and has traveled widely in the Soviet Union. His book is annotated and carries excellent illustrations.

LOUIS M. STARR

HOW TO TALK BACK TO YOUR TELEVISION SET. By Nicholas Johnson. Atlantic-Little, Brown. \$5.75.

□ Nicholas Johnson, we are told on the dust jacket of his new book, is "the youngest man ever to serve on the FCC and the most controversial." That he is, but as his compact, well researched, highly readable treatise shows, he also is a mature conservative in the sense of serving as a force that tries to make conserving possible. He advocates no overthrow of the system of commercial licensing; only its reform so that licensees must produce greater evidence of public service. He proposes no march on Washington, but cautions against precipitous action. His objective is to cut through layers of fantasy about broadcasting's ailments, and to provide a beginning guidebook for effecting a cure. The result is "must" reading for any American concerned with television—as an owner or employee, viewer, reporter/critic, or would-be crusader.

In succinct, anecdotal chapters he discusses the social effects of TV, the impact of conglomeratism (including the attempted ABC-ITT merger and its international implications), how and why non-commercial TV is perpetually starved, ways that pluralism and media access are encouraged abroad, problems and prospects of cable TV, and the outline of a citizens commission and institute on broadcasting. In a useful appendix he lists sources of informational materials, names of citizen organizations which interested persons may join, even a general schedule of license renewal years for broadcasters in various states. All in all, this brief book is an indispensable aid to understanding the need for reform of regulatory procedures in American broadcasting, and how a beginning, at least, might be made.

A.B.

CONFIRM OR DENY: INFORMING THE PEOPLE ON NATIONAL SECURITY. By Phil G. Goulding. Harper & Row. \$7.95.

□ A former Washington correspondent for the Cleveland *Plain Dealer* who served as Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs under Robert McNamara and Clark Clifford, the author provides interesting behind-the-scenes detail—and

some provocative opinions—on the conflict between newsmen who insist on the public's right to know and government officials who attempt to limit what the public shall be told when, in their view, disclosure might affect national security. Seven of the book's ten chapters are devoted to an explanation of how and why the Defense Department (and by extension, the Government) attempted to regulate the flow of information between early 1965 and January, 1969, in a series of crises, including the loss of an H-bomb near Palomares, Spain, and the capture of the *USS Pueblo*. Other chapters deal with the dissemination of information on major defense issues, such as the ABM controversy and the fight within government to de-escalate the war in Vietnam.

Goulding concedes that he and other government news managers blundered in some instances, and that "too much information which should have been released was not." He also is critical of the press, however, and as might be expected, the book is weighted on the side of justifying Defense Department information policies. Especially notable is the author's admiration for Robert McNamara, whom he credits with having been largely responsible for limiting the air war in Vietnam and for blocking the "costly thick ABM" system.

JOHN LUTER

RALPH MCGILL: EDITOR AND PUBLISHER. By Calvin McLeod Logue. Moore Publishing Co. \$6.95.

☐ This volume is so embarrassingly inept that one would like to pretend it never happened, but even an atrocious book about Ralph McGill needs notice. If Atlanta nurtures the main hope for civilization in the cotton states—a proposition widely entertained—this Atlanta is impossible to explain without reference to McGill and the *Atlanta Constitution*. It is characteristic of this panegyric that it never discloses how McGill became editor of the *Constitution*, nor mentions his relationship with the owners. The preface says that McGill, glancing over the manuscript, remarked that in the 1950s he was not always free to write what he wanted to write. If there is illumination

of this, an earnest search of the rag bag that follows has failed to disclose it. The author, described as "of the Department of Speech at the University of Georgia," equates scholarship with lots of quotes and footnotes, but rarely exposition.

The second half of the book has some reference value. It offers transcripts of eight McGill speeches on the school crisis, between 1954 and 1966, taken verbatim from tapes. These illustrate just how "moderate" a moderate thought he had to be in cajoling Southern whites toward token compliance in these tense years.

L.M.S.

MASS COMMUNICATION LAW CASES AND COMMENT. By Donald M. Gillmor and Jerome A. Barron. West Publishing Company. \$12.50.

☐ A University of Minnesota journalism professor and a George Washington University law professor collaborate on a somewhat technical but nonetheless valuable reference and teaching work encompassing new concepts such as the access-oriented approach to interpretation of the First Amendment.

LAW OF MASS COMMUNICATIONS: FREEDOM AND CONTROL OF PRINT AND BROADCAST. By Harold L. Nelson and Dwight L. Teeter, Jr. The Foundation Press, Inc. \$10.50.

☐ Recent interpretations of right of privacy, obscenity, free press/fair trial, libel, and other issues are offered in a fifth edition of the late Frank Thayer's *Legal Control of the Press*, extensively revised by two University of Wisconsin journalism professors.

WHEN PRESIDENTS MEET THE PRESS. By M. L. Stein. Julian Messner. \$3.95.

☐ Apparently written for the youth market, this brief review of Presidential press relations and press secretaries is too uncritical to serve advanced scholars, but nonetheless has value as a concise source of incidents, anecdotes, and quotations.

## Unfinished business

### ABC's Special Events

#### TO THE REVIEW:

In the interview "America's Two Cultures" [Winter, 1969-70], the distinguished journalist Theodore H. White made a surprisingly unsupported statement about ABC's coverage of special events. White said, "The coverage is so expensive it has already got beyond the budget of ABC; ABC has practically given up covering major events in depth."

This is simply not true. I hardly think that more than 50 hours devoted to the Apollo 11 lunar landing mission is giving up. Nor was the more than 30 hours devoted to Apollo 12 and the more than 30 hours planned for the Apollo 13 mission. This coverage has been and will continue to be fully competitive.

Perhaps Mr. White was thinking of ABC News' "unconventional" 90-minute wrap-up coverage of the 1968 political conventions. These programs were not dictated by cost alone, but also by journalistic considerations. By editing the coverage as a newspaper would (no newspaper, after all, would even consider printing every word uttered at a political convention), ABC News succeeded in doubling the audience it had reached during the 1964 political conventions and—more importantly—in bringing into the convention audience new viewers who had previously been frightened away by the lengthy over-coverage offered in the past.

But to refute Mr. White's contention in concrete, dollars-and-hours terms, let me here list the money and hours ABC News allocated to some recent special events coverage:

In 1969, ABC News had a special events budget in excess of \$4

million. This paid for such coverage as the 59 hours, 29 minutes of Apollo 11 and the more than 30 hours of Apollo 12. In the primary and election year of 1968, ABC News' special events budget was in excess of \$9 million. This paid for the more than 14 consecutive hours of Election Night coverage, coverage of six primary elections, and 21 hours, 49 minutes of political convention coverage in addition to other major events, including two assassinations and two space shots.

In 1968, ABC News aired 122 hours and 48 minutes of special reports and bulletins. In 1969, we aired 130 hours and 59 minutes of special reports and bulletins—all this time exclusive of regularly-scheduled news programs and documentaries. In addition, I should add that ABC News has been an equal participant with the other major news organizations in pool operations since 1952. I think the foregoing indicates that ABC News has not abdicated its responsibility to cover in depth the major events of our time.

ELMER W. LOWER  
President  
ABC News

### Multiplying Voices

#### TO THE REVIEW:

It was not my good fortune to be among the 800 readers asked to monitor the Washington *Post's* performance ["Multiplying Media Voices," Winter, 1969-70], but because of a recent event close to home I believe that some of the 800 are getting through some of my ideas and those of other middle-class Negroes.

The incident took place on Feb. 15 at Constitution Hall when the house was oversold for a rock concert by Sly and the Family Stone. Sly is a Negro and so is most of his band—if that is the word. What happened caused the DAR to cancel all future rock performances because of damage done by gatecrashers and/or disappointed ticket-holders.

The *Post* placed the opening story not on page 1, but in the Style (en-

tertainment) section, and confined subsequent events to a few brief paragraphs. But here is the incredible rest of the story: nowhere was the Marian Anderson incident of 1939 mentioned. Has the *Post* finally realized that the news-reading Negro is fed up with Marian Anderson vs. the DAR?

I buy the *Post* for Mary Haworth's column, despite her everlasting advice: seek psychiatric counseling—a luxury not many black people can afford. In twenty years I don't believe I have ever seen a purely Negro problem presented to her for solution. Maybe someone in the *Post* hierarchy could explain that.

GRACE JOHNSON  
Washington, D.C.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Mrs. Johnson's comments have been forwarded to the "Post" for reply. Edwin Diamond adds: "For the record, it should be noted that Mrs. Katharine Graham of the 'Post' says the idea for the panel mentioned in my article actually came from the Los Angeles 'Times,' and variations of it have been used by other publications, including magazines, for some time. The fact that only the 'Post' was mentioned in this regard was not intended to imply exclusivity."*

### "Dark Side" Revisited

#### TO THE REVIEW:

Flattered as one might be by Edwin Diamond's statement [in "The Dark Side of the Moon Coverage," Fall, 1969] that the New York *Times* was in a class by itself among newspapers [in coverage of Apollo 11], he is essentially out of sync with the facts in his various references, beginning with the first. The 96-point headline in the last edition of the *Times* on July 21, 1969, read MEN WALK ON THE MOON and not, as he records, MAN WALKS ON MOON.

Mr. Diamond mentions the importance of the German angle and writes that Bernard Weinraub of the *Times* "sniffed at the edge of the story" in an interview with

Kurt Debus at Cape Kennedy. Sure enough, Mr. Debus was one of many interviewed by Mr. Weinraub for a roundup not basically concerned with the Germans. If Mr. Diamond himself had sniffed a little harder, he would have discovered that Mr. Weinraub also did a lengthy piece from Huntsville, Ala., directly concerned with the Peenemünde Group. He would also have discovered two earlier pieces on V2-to-Saturn 5 and the wooing of the German rocketeers by East and West.

He cites two questions raised by A. M. Rosenthal in the first of a long series of memos on Apollo 11, proclaims them to be the "wrong" questions, and takes off from there. He says that the *Times*, as a consequence of the two questions, "proceeded to pick brains predominantly outside the newspaper, and mostly official NASA brains at that." He adds that the preparatory supplement, "Man and the Moon," thus "resembled more a bland government history than an independent analysis."

From the day before Apollo 11 lifted off to the day after it splashed down, the *Times* printed 500 columns of text material, photos, and diagrams on Apollo 11. About one-fifth of this total represented outside contributions. I am not apologizing for these contributions. They added dimension to our coverage and helped us achieve what we set out to do. Judging by the Aug. 4, 1969, issue of *Newsweek*, published while he was still on the magazine and dealing with space coverage, Mr. Diamond also believes in going outside the office occasionally for the best qualified writers. At any rate, that issue of *Newsweek* contained two articles by men associated with NASA (Robert Jastrow and Eugene Shoemaker) who had written earlier for the *Times*.

About fifty editors, reporters, photographers, artists, map-makers, makeup men, and copyreaders of the *Times*' staff were involved in the Apollo 11 coverage—not only in the United States, but also in the Pacific, Europe, and even Madagascar. In this group was Richard Witkin, whom Mr. Diamond justly

admires and who, after all, works for the *Times*. In addition, there were more than fifty outside contributors, including some of the men most directly responsible for sending Apollo 11 to the moon. There were also other scientists, science writers and technologists, theologians, academicians, literary figures, people in the arts, social critics, and so on. Of the outside contributors, fifteen were with NASA and four were formerly with NASA. The "official" NASA brains of which Mr. Diamond speaks included John P. Mayer on plotting the course to the moon, Warren North on training astronauts, Cris Kraft on the use of computers, Bob Jastrow on a primer of the heavens, and Dr. Charles A. Berry on aerospace medicine. The ex-NASA men included John Glenn and John C. Houbolt, who fought the battle inside NASA for acceptance of lunar-orbit rendezvous.

For the "Man and the Moon" supplement, NASA specialists were, indeed, asked to write about their specialties—to explain, reminisce, tell it their own way, not through a filter, but first hand. The lead story about NASA was assigned not to a NASA man, but to John Noble Wilford, our own chief space writer, and Ralph E. Lapp was asked specifically to write a critique of the space program. There were other contributors, too, including Arthur C. Clarke and Isaac Asimov.

In his comments on the supplement, Mr. Diamond refers to "obvious" omissions. Leaving aside individual differences in judgment, much of what Mr. Diamond says was missing was actually there. John Wilford wrote reams about the Apollo fire and the manufacturing deficiencies in the Apollo program when both were news. He touched these bases again in a supplement article headed \$24-BILLION FOR BIG PUSH TO THE MOON. As for Mr. Diamond's assertion that the *Times* overlooked the Cold War and John F. Kennedy's desire for a space spectacular, it is hard to believe he could list these points after reading the supplement.

Aside from Dick Lyons' article on the Sputnik phenomenon and

the pieces on the German rocketeers, there was a special article by John Logsdon on "Space and Power Politics." Furthermore, the Logsdon article was accompanied by a reproduction of Mr. Kennedy's memo to then Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson in which he specifically raised the question of how the United States could beat the Russians in space.

HENRY R. LIEBERMAN  
Director of Science and  
Education News  
New York Times

EDITOR'S NOTE: Mr. Diamond comments, "Mr. Lieberman did catch me in one misprint: the headline I referred to appeared in a late edition but not the latest. But he tries to counter the undeniable fact that the supplement 'Man and the Moon' was full of government contributors with the non sequitur that fifty 'Timesmen' worked on the paper's daily coverage. He tries to counter the undeniable fact that much was missing from the 'Times' sanitized version of space history with the non sequitur that the 'Times' had carried the stories 'when they were news.' If that is the standard for omission in a history, then what would be left to put in?"

"Mr. Lieberman knows I don't object to the 'Times' using outside contributors—I have been such a contributor for eight years. What I do object to—and what he is too sensible to try to defend explicitly—is the use of government men to give a government view. The pre-eminent journalistic question in space in the last decade has been the truth or falsity of the so-called 'race to beat the Russians.' Every year about appropriations time, government experts trot out this bogeyman to scare Congress and the public into coughing up more money. For years some of us have been saying in print that the 'space gap'—like the 'missile gap' before it—was phony, that the U. S. was racing only itself. At this late date, the Logsdon article still peddles the old Cold War line about the 'Soviet Challenge in Space'—as does the other article in the



*'Times' supplement that touches on the political history ('A New Marxist Frontier'). Perhaps some day the 'Times' will give this moribund idea the burial it deserves—and using its own staff talent."*

## The Teachers Strikes

### TO THE REVIEW:

In "New York's Black Anti-Semitism Scare" [Fall, 1969], Fred Ferretti's description of events leading to the school strike in 1968 singularly misses the facts. The wholesale involuntary "transfer" of teachers out of a school district—which preceded the union "walkout" in the previous spring that Mr. Ferretti refers to—had no precedent in established New York City practice and no sanction under law. He also fails to note that the teachers were ordered reinstated by former Civil Court Judge Francis E. Rivers after a Board of Education administrative hearing; the refusal of the Ocean Hill-Brownsville Governing Board to comply with this order was the precipitating factor in the strike.

It is a key argument in Mr. Ferretti's analysis that the media gave little or no circulation to anti-UFT position papers during and after the school strike. His prime example is the pamphlet "The Burden of Blame," put out by the New York Civil Liberties Union on Oct. 28, 1968. In noting that the NYCLU piece got only "three paragraphs in the jump of a page 1 *Times* story," Mr. Ferretti forgets that the pamphlet was being hotly debated all over town within days of its publication, that it was discussed in the pages of the *Village Voice* and the *New York Review of Books*, among other local journals, and on radio talk shows. . . . The fact is that while the NYCLU pamphlet was widely circulated, the replies to it—a UFT pamphlet entitled "The Burden of Blame-Placing"; and a well reasoned critique by Maurice Goldbloom—got no circulation at all.

ADL was selected as the investigative arm of the Botein Committee because the Mayor knew, as did

many others, that ADL had been engaged in investigation of anti-Semitic incidents in the public schools for two years and more, as one part of its ongoing survey of anti-Semitism nationwide. . . . The ADL report of Jan. 23, 1969, was the report the League would have issued had there never been a Botein Committee. If, by Mr. Ferretti's lights, it was not "restrained"—although, given the information we never made public, it was remarkably restrained—it nevertheless succeeded in muting the extremist voices that had not been checked, as they should have been, by school authorities. . . .

Mr. Ferretti asks, "Would it have not been more responsible to have included not just Campbell's poetry reading, but part of the radio discussion which accompanied it?" To this Mr. Ferretti responds by printing his transcript of the relevant section of the program. Unfortunately for your readers, however, there are many ellipses in Mr. Ferretti's transcript—and they are revealing. (Contrary to his statement, the tape of the WBAL-FM program was obtained by the ADL—in response to complaints from listeners—and the tape was also obtained by the *Times*, a fact he could have checked with his colleague who did the *Times* story on the matter.) Mr. Ferretti deliberately omits, for example, this characterization of the "poetry" of Thea Behran—the fifteen-year-old who wrote the viciously anti-Semitic and historically fantastic "poem"—by Leslie Campbell, then a teacher in the Ocean Hill-Brownsville schools and an officer of the African-American Teachers Association.

CAMPBELL: This sister is a very—to me she put things in a very flat, cold flat type of atmosphere [in] which [it] is very plain to understand what she is saying. And she is feeling things exactly as she feels and sees them—and she doesn't have all of the worldly knowledge and all of the, you know, classical background that a lot of the so-called acceptable writers and people have. . . . But I think that what she does have

—she has a tremendous sense of truth and a very raw, open sense of truth, and I think she tells it exactly the way it is. [Emphasis added.]

After the reading of the anti-Semitic poem, Campbell states: "This is one of the things in the book by Thea Behran, and she has some other beautiful things here. . . ." I find the omission of these statements by Mr. Campbell a curious lapse on Mr. Ferretti's part.

In discussing critiques of the ADL report, Mr. Ferretti focuses first on one by Professor Leonard Fein of the Harvard-MIT Joint Center for Urban Studies, who was at that time chairman of an American Jewish Congress commission. Mr. Ferretti bemoans the lack of circulation of Professor Fein's "analysis," but, in fact, it was contained in a personal letter to me. I was about to mail Professor Fein my analysis of his document when I learned from Will Maslow, executive director of the AJC, that he had written to Fein sharply challenging his points and repudiating them as reflective of the American Jewish Congress position. . . .

The next personality Mr. Ferretti chooses to rely upon is Henry Schwarzschild. This gives me the opportunity . . . to clear up some illusions about . . . Mr. Schwarzschild and his role in the Jewish community. The fact is that Henry Schwarzschild was relieved of his responsibility as publications director at the Anti-Defamation League for reasons we deemed good and sufficient, and since that day he has been bent on a personal vendetta against ADL. Since no one at ADL, to my knowledge, has seen Mr. Schwarzschild's "study," it certainly did not earn him the honor of "being denied access to the ADL offices." Such a study, if it exists, was done for Mr. Ferretti's benefit. . . .

At the end of his article, Mr. Ferretti parcels out praise almost exclusively to those journalists who, like himself, saw the 1968 school confrontation from an anti-UFT stance and reported it as such. . . . Significantly, he says nothing of the opposing views of Bernard Bard, education editor of the New York

Post, or Leonard Buder of the New York Times, et al.

The 1968 school controversy was at best an unhappy event, but a natural result of the politics of confrontation. . . . The debating points have all been made. The need to look into one's own motives is at least as great as the need to examine the special pleading of one's opponents. The overly self-righteous often extend the evil rather than cure it.

ARNOLD FORSTER  
General Counsel  
Anti-Defamation League  
of B'nai B'rith  
New York City

EDITOR'S NOTE: Mr. Ferretti stated "there never was a transcript of the [WBAI] program," not that a tape never had been requested. It also should be noted that CJR, not Mr. Ferretti, is responsible for the ellipses in the WBAI transcript because space precluded running it in full. Because publicity, and the UFT complaint to the FCC, focused on the poem, we felt justified in condensing the material around it. Necessarily we also have condensed Mr. Forster's six-page letter. Mr. Ferretti's comments:

"I believe my position with regard to the ADL report can be summed up this way: I suggest that the ADL shot from the hip and in so doing did irreparable harm to the social fabric of New York. The two critiques from which I have quoted—those of Leonard Fein and Henry Schwarzschild—say the same thing in detailed, documented fashion.

"Mr. Forster says that Mr. Fein's analysis did not receive wide circulation because it was contained in a personal letter to him. This was so noted to me by Mr. Fein. It is also true that there are other copies of that letter. One went to Mr. Maslow of the American Jewish Congress. The NYCLU had a copy—the one I saw—and it is in their offices for anyone to read. In view of the importance of Mr. Fein's analysis, why didn't Mr. Forster publicize it? Did he not believe that Mr. Fein raised valid points? Or was he afraid to give publicity to a critique which

so thoroughly demolishes the ADL report? Why he allowed another agency to reply to his personal letter is Mr. Forster's responsibility.

"Mr. Forster's comments on the Schwarzschild letter contain nothing about its criticisms, merely personal attacks on Mr. Schwarzschild. The study does indeed exist and is part of the NYCLU's files."

## Comment by the Bay

### TO THE REVIEW:

I would like to correct a few errors in the David M. Rubin-William L. Rivers article about the San Francisco Chronicle ["Schizophrenia by the Bay," Fall, 1969].

Charles de Young Thieriot, publisher of the Chronicle, is the nephew of the late George T. Cameron, not his son-in-law. While it is true that Paul C. Smith left the Chronicle in 1952, he did not take Pierre Salinger with him; Mr. Salinger remained on the staff until 1955. In their attempt to show that Mr. Thieriot contradicted himself before the Senate hearings on the Newspaper Preservation Act, in discussing the Chronicle's financial condition during 1955-1965, Rubin-Rivers demonstrated an inability to understand a simple fact of corporate financial reporting—that a profit before depreciation or amortization can become a loss after.

It may be almost "unheard of" to the authors and their sources for a Chronicle reporter to be sprung loose to write a "deep story" (whatever that is), but there is seldom a week in which one or more of our staff is not detached from daily duties (sometimes for weeks on end) to research a complicated story. Perhaps the authors are confused by the fact that such research often results in one major story rather than a long-winded series.

The attempt to categorize our foreign stringer operation by recounting the tale of the Indian correspondent inquiring about a \$12 check is hilarious to anyone who knows the facts—with the possible exception of the man who pays the bill. My latest accounting of these

foreign service costs for the week ending Dec. 6 shows a total expenditure of \$1,075.16, and this is typical, not exceptional.

Among the news services the authors credit the Chronicle with having under contract are the Chicago Daily News, the London Times, and the Guardian (previously the Manchester Guardian). The Chronicle has not been a subscriber to the Chicago Daily News Service since July, 1966. The London Times News Service provides only the right to reprint from its pages after publication, and the Guardian service was absorbed by the Washington Post-Los Angeles Times News Service at the time that wire was established in 1962.

While it is true that we devote some space to the activities of society in the Bay Area, our women's staff is distinguished for a long series of impressive reports on the very subjects members of the staff are quoted as wanting—the sexual and social problems of modern women. In the past two years alone, this section has carried series on abortion, employment problems, the women's liberation movement, breast cancer, and Lesbianism; the first long interviews with such distinguished black women as Kathleen Cleaver and Angela Davis; and long single articles on school busing, teen-agers and the Pill, sterilization, and unwed mothers, among many others.

The notion that our sports department is on short rations is ridiculous. In successive years, staff members covered NCAA basketball championships in New York, Louisville, Kansas City, and Seattle. We covered the U. S. Open Golf championship in Houston in 1969, the PGA tournament in 1967, and the Masters' tournament in Georgia for the past several consecutive years.

In attempting to explain the editorial philosophy of the Chronicle, the authors quote some of my most distinguished colleagues. Unfortunately, my colleagues are gifted "put-on" artists as well as accomplished newspapermen. I would therefore suggest to the authors that they take the advice Attorney General John Mitchell gave to the civil rights protestors—"You would

be better informed if instead of listening to what we say, you watch what we do."

GORDON PATES  
Managing Editor  
San Francisco Chronicle

## The "Guild Reporter"

### TO THE REVIEW:

Mitchell Charnley's evaluation of the *Guild Reporter* [Summer, 1969] is not an unfair one, insofar as its presentation of the *Reporter's* content, but its conclusion is unfair because it measures the *Reporter* against a false yardstick—that of a "journalists'" or "professionals'" journal.

The Newspaper Guild represents more than just "journalists." More than half of its membership consists of advertising, business-office, circulation, maintenance, and other non-editorial employees. And unlike the Radio-Television News Directors Association and the National Conference of Editorial Writers, with whose publications the *Guild*

*Reporter* is compared, the Guild, while it attempts to advance its members' professional interests as far as it is able, is a labor union whose primary purpose is the advancement of its members' economic independence and job security (which, lest we forget, are the necessary underpinning of such professional standing as they may have). Any evaluation that does not take these two considerations into account is likely to be shooting at a nonexistent target.

If the *Guild Reporter* "resonates to the immorality of the publisher whose gold lines his pockets rather than his pay envelopes," as Mr. Charnley puts it, this is not only because that is a primary concern of the Guild's members *qua* members but because there is no other publication or organization that so resonates. This is not to say that there is no room for improvement in the *Reporter's* coverage, including that of Mr. Charnley's area of concern: the performance of the press. We are presently trying to expand the space devoted to this and related areas consistent with our limited budget and staff: one

fulltime editor and one parttime assistant. In January we wrote all our locals encouraging Guild members in a position to evaluate their papers to submit articles.

I find one aspect of Professor Charnley's criticism strange indeed: his reservations about "the present rule that the editor has no choice about publishing letters—any Guildsman may sound off in the *Reporter* (up to 200 words) if he avoids 'subjects detrimental to the Guild' . . . [and] the paper's policy on 'political' advertising for candidates for Guild offices . . . (candidates for principal offices may have 18 inches, those for the least important nine)." If Professor Charnley finds something wrong with a policy that allows members to speak their piece without restriction by the editor, or that permits all candidates for office equal space in both the *Reporter's* advertising and news columns, I think few union members and fewer critics of the labor press would agree.

DAVID J. EISEN  
Acting Editor  
The Guild Reporter  
Washington, D.C.



### Judge Signs Letter of Condolence

A letter of sympathy to the family of a Richmond policeman killed in an auto wreck Tuesday is signed by Judge Robert Merhige Jr. of the U.S. Eastern District Court. From left are: Dean Jennings, of the Richmond Police Department, Judge Merhige, C. R. Hornsbee and F. J.

Kelly, both of the Department of Law Enforcement at Virginia Commonwealth University. The policeman killed was David Arnold Cooper. Merhige spoke in Roanoke Thursday at the end of a seminar for 150 Virginia policemen, sponsored by VCU.

### Sympathy Department

—Roanoke, Va., Times  
(February 13)

## REPORT ON REPORTS

Summaries and reviews  
of current literature in journalism

"Press Coverage of Civil Disorders: A Case Study of Winston-Salem, 1967," by David L. Paletz and Robert Dunn, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, Fall, 1969; "Some Influences of Television on Civil Unrest," by Herschel Shostack, *Journal of Broadcasting*, Fall, 1969.

A study of the Winston-Salem *Journal's* reporting postulates that self-imposed restraints on coverage of civil unrest act to maintain the status quo; and an Indianapolis research project concludes that TV made little impact on whites or blacks, although "viewers saw news and TV special reports as beneficial in helping solve major community problems."

"The Legal Rights and Responsibilities of College Student Publications," by Peter M. Sandman, *Phi Delta Epsilon*, National Honorary Collegiate Journalism Fraternity, December, 1969.

A Stanford graduate student summarizes current legal decisions affecting student newspapers and offers guidelines on copyright, obscenity, libel, and other issues.

"Covering the Vietnam War," by Peter Braestrup, *Nieman Reports*, December, 1969.

A dispassionate yet critical memoir by a former *New York Times* and *Washington Post* Saigon hand maintains that despite many shortcomings (which he enumerates) "we did collectively about what could be expected"—but he hopes "we do better next time."

"Are We Booting The Big Story Again? The Press and the Environmental Crisis," by Gladwin Hill, *Bulletin of the American Society of Newspaper Editors*, December, 1969.

A *New York Times* national correspondent looks askance at media "pecking" at the "environmental story," warning that errors of race relations coverage are being repeated in much "piecemeal, uncorrelated, uncritical . . . sloppy" reportage.

"Reporting the Movement," by Sandie North, *Atlantic*, March, 1970.

A cautionary brief by a woman free-lance writer recounts difficulties faced by female as well as male journalists in dealing with the Woman's Liberation Movement.

"See the Rhinoceros Running Left to Right . . . the Thrill is Gone," by Paul Wilkes, *New York*, January 12, 1970.

A *New York* contributing editor perceptively discusses attempts of Time, Inc., to reverse the fortunes of *Life*, which reportedly lost \$10 million in 1969 despite a Louis Harris-finding that "subscribers are enthusiastic about the magazine."

"Do You Believe Newspapers?" by Courtney Sheldon, *Christian Science Monitor*, December 4, 1969.

A thoughtful if predictable analysis of a study for the AP Managing Editors shows that, despite individual favorable comments on overall performance, "the conclusion is unavoidable that American newspapers do have a credibility gap of substantial proportions."

"What It Takes to Score in Local News," *Broadcasting*, January 5, 1970.

An examination of local news of network-affiliated KPIX (San Francisco), WSM (Nashville), WHTN (Huntington, W. Va.), and independent WGN in Chicago finds that "although all stations report expanding budgets" competitive expenses also are building—but "station managers consider it well worth the cost."

"Stereotyping in Magazine Ads," by Keith K. Cox, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, Winter, 1969-70.

A sequel to a 1949-50 study of advertisements in six general magazines reveals a significant shift upward in the status of Negroes portrayed.

"Play Ball!" by Stanley Frank, *TV Guide*, January 17-23, 1970.

A lively, informative, and persuasive report characterizes sports promoters' control of air rights to their own productions as "odious" and conducive to "shilling," and argues that much more straightforward reporting will be demanded by the new generation of fans.

"Helen Gurley Only Wants to Help," by Nora Ephron, *Esquire*, February, 1970.

An acid-etched appraisal of *Cosmopolitan's* "dreadfully sincere" editor-in-chief, who "is proving, at sizable financial profit, the old Mencken dictum that no one ever went broke underestimating the intelligence of the American public."

DANIEL J. LEAB



## the lower case

### Lie Tests Due In Suffocation Death of Indian

Lie Tests Due  
In Suffocation  
Of Indian, 92

No Suspects Held;  
Polygraph Test Due  
For Several in Case

#### Moment of Truth

—Daily Oklahoman, Sept. 18, 1969.

This week's

### RANK PICTURE EXHIBITIONS

Just the news, please

—U.K. Press Gazette, Dec. 8, 1969.

### Heart Disease Twice As Fatal As Cancer

Copyreader's overkill

—Lexington, Ky., Leader.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I take this time to indicate that I just missed the vote on the tax reform measure, because I was in the television gallery making a tape on how I voted on the tax reform measure. I would like to state that had I been present and not making that tape, I would have voted in favor of the tax reform measure.

#### Department of clarification

—Congressional Record,  
Dec. 27, 1969.

create a buffer zone around the Naval Ammunition Depot. Seeping beer during his final hours in Port Chicago, Mr. Bidelman, a 65-year-old retired jeweler, said his wife's frazzled nerves and broken water and sewer lines had forced him to move, not the Navy.

#### Burnt out case

—New York Times, Nov. 19, 1969.

Marshall said the testing last Tuesday was successful in that all three warning horns around towns functioned. The new warning devices will be used to alert residents of impending tornadoes, other natural disasters and air attacks in case of World War III.

#### On the alert

—DeKalb, Ill., Daily Chronicle, Feb. 23.

players he has coached. "Jim is an accomplished player at almost every aspect of the game," commented Kull. "Though he only stands 6-2 he is able to go up after rebounds with the bigger boys and usually comes down with them."

#### Whatever goes up

—Parsippany, N.J., Daily Record, Feb. 16.

One small girl who was held up to a window in the Washington monument for a view of the Capitol and the city beyond summed it up with her breathless "It's so beautiful, Daddy." Beautiful it was and is. But there is more than beauty. There is a majestic strength and a sense of immortality to be gained from looking at the dome of the Capitol, the marble buildings housing the departments of this nation, the portico of the White House.

THESE BUILDINGS seem to

#### Beautiful but . . .

—Hornell, N.Y., Evening Tribune,  
Dec. 29, 1969.

The Secret Service has discarded its interest in nickel and dime crooks who specialize in cheating stamp and change machines in semi-automated post offices.

It will continue to track counterfeiters and people who threaten the safety of the President. But the Treasury agency has discarded its interest in nickel and dime crooks who specialize in cheating stamp and change machines in semi-automated post offices.

#### Small change

—"The Federal Diary," Washington Post,  
Aug. 26, 1969.

"Journalists die on the average at the age of 53 and only one out of five reaches retirement age. There are many reasons for this disturbing situation. It is undoubtedly related to the character of the work which is conducted mainly under conditions of great nervous strain and in a great hurry as well as to bad conditions in local editorial offices (including our own).

"The work is damaging to health and causes many diseases, especially diseases of the circulatory system (heart attacks in young men), of the nervous system and ulcers. There was discussion of this at the national conference of leaders of the journalists union which met in Warsaw recently with the Chief Committee of the Association of Book, Press and Radio

#### Subjective reality

—Zycie Warszawy, Warsaw, Poland.

## Second reading

# **"It is not given to man to be sure of truth"**

■ How do you settle whether your opinions are right or wrong? There is nothing to measure them by; I have done the best I could through many years to search for truth. Sometimes I have thought I had a gleam of truth; sometimes I felt that I had in my hands the truth, a truth that could not be disputed, but that would be true forever. Sometimes I thought I had found it; and then again I thought I had lost it; and the truth I so fondly held in my hands was only an empty dream, and not the truth at all; and I have searched again and again, and here I find it and there I lose it; and I expect it will be this way until the end. It is not given to man to be sure of the truth. There are no standards, there are no measures; everything is dumped in on his imperfect brain. He weighs it the best he can and finds out the best way he can whether it is true or false; and he never knows. Therefore, gentlemen, above everything else on earth, men should cling fast to their right to examine every question; to listen to everyone, no matter who he is; to hear the spoken words and read the written words; because if you shut men's mouths and paralyze their minds, then the greatest truth that is necessary for the welfare of the human race may die.

Gentlemen, nature works in a mysterious way. When a new truth comes upon the earth, or a great idea necessary for mankind is born, where does it come from? Not from the police force or the prosecuting attorneys or the judges or the lawyers or the doctors; not there. It comes from the despised, and the outcast; it comes perhaps from jails and prisons; it comes from men who have dared to be rebels and think their thoughts; and their fate has been the fate of rebels. This generation gives them graves while another builds them monuments; and there is no exception to it. It has been true since the world began, and it will be true no doubt forever.

—Clarence Darrow,  
Trial of Communist Labor Party members, 1920,  
in "Attorney for the Damned," Arthur Weinberg, ed.,  
Simon and Schuster (1957).

